

THE GOLDEN QUILL

The majestic sweep of this superb novel brings to life one of the most graceful and enchanting periods of European history. Across the pages of the book marches a glittering procession of famous historical figures, whilst the vast panorama embraces the splendours of palaces as well as the misery of tenements and sordid taverns in Europe's great cities.

Such is the setting of Bernard Grun's novel built around the truly fabulous life story of the sublime Mozart. Here, with rare felicity, he unfolds the whole story as recorded by Mozart's sister, Nannerl, in a diary presented to her by King George III. The golden quill of the title is the pen given to the boy prodigy when he played the piano before the King and Queen in 1764.

The Golden Quill is primarily a romantic novel with an appeal to readers in all walks of life, and while the author has used his imaginative skill to re-create the life and times of Mozart, he has nevertheless kept as closely as possible to the known facts of the composer's almost incredible career.

Also by Bernard Grun

**PRIVATE LIVES OF THE GREAT COMPOSERS
PRINCE OF VIENNA**

BERNARD GRUN

The Golden Quill



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To
EDITH

In tristitia hilaris, in hilaritate tristis—

GIORDANO BRUNO

PROLOGUE

6th September 1856

THE post-chaise was nearing Salzburg. Among its passengers was a short, slim, elegant old gentleman, with dark lively eyes and flowing white hair, who sat looking out of the window, enjoying the scenery. He was smiling to himself in quiet appreciation of the whole peaceful landscape which could be seen from the coach: the silvery mountain tops, the wide green Alpine meadows, the little brook hurrying along by the side of the road, and the countless trees showing off their finest autumnal shades in the glow of the afternoon sun.

Slowly and gently, in the manner of elderly people who have long given up the world's haste and bustle, he drew his gold watch from his waistcoat pocket and glanced at its dial. 'Hardly an hour more', he told himself, 'and we arrive. Then my peace will be at an end—receptions, processions, serenades, concerts, banquets. . . .' He sighed softly.

The elderly traveller was Signor Carlo Mozart, son of the great Wolfgang Amadeus, the centenary of whose birth fell in this year of grace, 1856. Formerly a minor civil servant in Milan, Signor Mozart had now retired, and was living partly on the small estate he owned at Caversaccio on Lake Como. At the beginning of the week he had taken the train from Como to Milan, but from Milan was obliged, owing to the lack of a railway over the Brenner Pass, to proceed by coach on the long journey to Salzburg, where he was travelling for the centenary celebrations. His two friends, the village priest and doctor, had brought him to the station at Como. They had been solicitous in reminding him of the danger to his health in doing too much or allowing himself to become over-excited; above all he should try not to let anything upset him. He had promised them to

be very careful, but already, now the coach was approaching Salzburg, he began to feel an excitement greater than he would have cared to confess.

Carlo had not been in Salzburg for fourteen years. That was when his brother was still alive, and they were both attending the unveiling of the Mozart monument in the Michaelsplatz; but even then he had only spent a few hours there.

'In fact', mused Carlo, 'I have never stayed in Salzburg for more than a week or two on my holidays, yet it is strange what an attraction the city has for me, with its wide squares, its maze of narrow old lanes, its steeples and cupolas, bridges and balconies and doors and courtyards. Strange that I should love it more than any other city, more than Vienna where I was born, Prague where I was young and happy, or Milan where I have lived contentedly for fifty years. Could it be some unsuspected link with my father's destiny? I think not, for he came to detest Salzburg with all his heart, and only when he freed himself from its influence and environment did he become truly great.'

Two days ago, when the coach arrived at Innsbruck, where he had hoped to remain incognito, he was horrified to find a host of people assembled in the main square to greet him: a brass band, massed choirs, the rifle corps and gymnastic clubs; and in front, solemnly frock-coated and top-hatted, what must have been the entire town council. The Mayor had delivered a diffuse and somewhat tedious address, welcoming 'the last scion of the mighty Mozartian tree'.

'The last Mozart', Carlo thought, remembering the flowery words used; 'that would only be regrettable had I inherited some of my father's talent. As unfortunately I have not, what does it matter if the Mozart family name dies with me? Oh dear, all this adulation . . .' —and he sighed again.

Throughout this year Mozart concerts had been given and Mozart operas produced in Vienna, Rome and Paris, London and Moscow, in far-off New York and Rio de Janeiro; everywhere new statues to the composer were unveiled, new tributes paid to the glories of his music. Although the date of the hundredth birthday fell in January, the climax of the celebrations had been postponed till September as more suitable for so great an occasion; and as the year went on, the quiet, retiring, seventy-two-year-old Carlo Mozart had been dragged increasingly into the glare of a most unwelcome limelight. The

newspaper writers invaded his home in Milan and his garden on Lake Como, a stream of letters poured down on him daily: letters of congratulations, begging letters—even love letters and offers of marriage. The constant intrusion into his peace and privacy had become so irksome by the beginning of May that he felt like locking himself in his small library and refusing to see anyone.

But one morning there arrived in his house a deputation from the Salzburg Festival Committee, suggesting in a friendly yet pertinacious manner that Mozart's birthplace, more than any other town in the world, had a claim to shelter Mozart's only surviving son within its walls during these festive days. Either he saw the justice of this claim, or he was worn down by the importunate demands made on him in the previous months; or perhaps the decision was partly induced by some inexplicable force drawing him to Salzburg. At any rate he promised the notabilities of the city that he would attend the celebrations in September—though he expressed a wish to receive no personal honours: he would prefer to be simply one of the many thousands who at that time would be paying homage to the creator of *Don Giovanni* and *The Magic Flute*.

His reflections were interrupted by Giuseppe, his old valet, who was sitting next to him, and who now announced that they had reached the outskirts of Salzburg. Giuseppe then carefully removed the tartan travelling rug which had covered Carlo's knees, and busied himself adroitly with the luggage. Signor Mozart looked out of the coach window, and with some emotion saw the silhouette of the town rising on the horizon: the old castle, the Mönchsberg, the towers and steeples of all the churches, and the silvery band of the river Salzach. Here they all were, unchanged; and he found them as beautiful as ever.

The coach passed slowly through the narrow streets, until it reached the Linzerstrasse, where a suite had been reserved for Carlo at the Traube Inn. 'Thank goodness', he thought, as the coach reached the old inn, 'no town councils, choirs and brass bands here!' But the spell was broken as three bustling solicitous gentlemen, who introduced themselves as members of the Festival Committee, came forward to welcome their guest, help him out of the coach and escort him into the Traube amidst many deferential bows from the landlord and servants.

The three Festival officials at once began inspecting the suite to

ensure that it contained all the amenities they considered necessary for his well-being. Having found everything to their satisfaction, they informed Signor Mozart that out of consideration for his long journey and the very full programme planned next day, they had refrained from arranging any official engagements that evening. Unfortunately, however, enthusiastic elements in the local population could not be dissuaded from demonstrating their devotion towards the Signor by a short serenade; he should therefore be prepared for this, and they hoped he would not take it amiss. Carlo nodded understandingly, but with a slight air of fatigue; observing which the three delegates discreetly withdrew.

The old gentleman then went to take his bath, which Giuseppe had by now prepared. When he returned much refreshed to his sitting-room he saw that it was almost evening. Slowly the lights began to appear on the mountains. From afar came the strains of singing, and marching music, punctuated by the intermittent firing of mortar salutes.

Carlo stepped out on to the balcony. On the little square outside the inn a number of people had assembled, and, as they recognised Signor Mozart, they shouted greetings. The marching music grew louder, and down the Linzerstrasse came a gay procession of boys and girls in the traditional costumes of Salzburg, with flaring torches and colourful Chinese lanterns. The procession stopped in front of Carlo's balcony, the band formed a circle and a torch-bearer moved up behind each musician. A sudden hush fell all round, just as if it were a concert hall and the conductor had raised his baton; and then there flowed forth, through the soft air of a Salzburg evening in early autumn, the opening phrases of *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik*, as hauntingly lovely as ever.

Carlo listened with that deep inner agitation which his father's music always aroused in him. He had rested his hands on the balcony railing, and scarcely noticed Giuseppe approaching with a coat to put round his shoulders. As the serenade went on, dozens of small boats, adorned with gay lanterns, came sailing down the Salzach, and bonfires began to blaze on the tops of the surrounding mountains. Clearly and boldly, in yellow, green and red letters, the name MOZART glowed in phosphorescent writing far out in the distance.

Friendly applause greeted the end of the *Kleine Nachtmusik*, after which the procession slowly reformed itself. Again, as a sort of

farewell, the people in the street beckoned and waved to Carlo, who bowed silently a couple of times towards them, and then retired, almost apologetically, into his suite. In the meantime Giuseppe had laid the table, and prepared a small supper: some cold meat, Swiss cheese with dark rye-bread and fresh-smelling butter; for dessert, golden-red apricots, preserved in a sauce of thick syrup. The old gentleman nibbled a bit of everything, and then ceremoniously lit his nightly cigar. Through the open window he could hear the music of the torchlight procession fade away over the bridge towards the old town, and finally merge into the silence of the night. The bonfires on the mountain tops died down, and unhurriedly Salzburg settled itself for bed.

Breathing deeply the cool night air, Carlo Mozart took a leisurely stroll across the bridge of the Salzach towards the Getreidegasse—called Drehgasse a hundred years before when Wolfgang Amadeus was born there. For a moment he stopped in front of the Hagenauer house, festively decorated with flowers and brushwood, bearing under a lyre the inscription in golden letters: MOZART'S BIRTHPLACE.

He looked up to the windows of the third floor, then turned left towards the Michaelsplatz, the objective of his brief journey. And now, in front of him, rose the bronze statue of his father, gazing upwards at the heavens, as if alone on the summit of a high mountain; holding a quill in the right hand, and in the left his last sheet of music-paper. '*Tuba mirum spargens sonum . . .*'—it sounded mightily into the night.

For a while Carlo stood motionless, looking up at the serene figure, letting the great melody from the *Requiem* run unbidden through his head. With a slight shiver he turned away, moved slowly across the lonely square, and started back towards the Traube. Turning for a last look at the statue, he noticed a man who had appeared from a dark corner and seemed to be following him: a tubby little man, enveloped in a huge old-fashioned overcoat, with a high top-hat on his head, and carrying a parcel which he clasped nervously to his chest.

'A petitioner, I suppose', thought Carlo, 'wishing to accost me with some request or other'—and he began to walk faster, because of a peculiar fear of strangers which had affected him since his childhood. The stranger continued to follow him through the narrow streets, along the banks of the Salzach, across the bridge right into

the Linzerstrasse; and all the time Carlo could hear his pursuer's steps on the cobblestones.

At last, perspiring and exhausted, he reached the Traube, and, banging the entrance door behind him, panted up the stairs and into his room. There he sank heavily into an armchair with a sigh of relief. 'How very silly of me!' he reflected. 'Why on earth do I run away from someone who is probably quite harmless, and simply wishes to ask me or tell me something? My nerves must be overstrained—and I promised not to upset myself. . . .

There was a knock at the door, and Giuseppe entered. On a salver he carried a visiting card. 'The gentleman requests Your Honour to spare him just a few minutes on a most important matter.'

'So late?' said Carlo, as he read the engraved card:

Court Councillor
Dr Wolfgang Amadeus Schachtner
Keeper of the Municipal Archives
for the City of Salzburg

'Schachtner', he murmured, 'Schachtner . . . I certainly seem to know that name. If only I weren't so dreadfully tired, and if I had a better memory for names. . . . Will you ask the Court Councillor to enter?'

The visitor was a kindly-looking gentleman, perhaps in his late fifties. He made no move to take off his huge overcoat; in one hand he held his top-hat, in the other the parcel.

'A thousand apologies, Signor Mozart', he began, bowing deeply, 'in case I frightened you in the Michaelsplatz. For some hours I have been trying to find a favourable opportunity to talk to you. I should never, of course, have dared disturb you at such a late hour, were not my mission an unusually important one. And perhaps you may even recall that many years ago I had the honour to be presented to you. . . .' He paused for a moment, and looked enquiringly, hopefully, at Carlo; then continued with an air of slight disappointment: 'As I said before, Signore, my mission is extremely important, but it is also, let me assure you, a very brief one.'

Slowly it dawned on Carlo: Schachtner—Schachtner—of course! How could he have forgotten that name?

'My dear Dr Schachtner', he said, offering his hand to the visitor, 'you are very welcome. Please sit down, and tell me how I can help you.'

Obviously relieved that the ice had been broken, the worthy Court Councillor sat fussily down, placing his top-hat on the floor near him and still hugging the mysterious parcel. Then he coughed loudly and launched into his important mission:

'May I be so bold as to remind you, Signore, that for many years our two families lived on the friendliest of terms, and that for a long time I personally had the honour to enjoy the confidence of the late Baroness von Berchtold. . . .'

'My very good Aunt Nannerl!'

'Yes, my dear Sir, the sister of the sublime Mozart, Maria Anna, or Nannerl, as all the world used to call her. I was privileged to enjoy her company for a whole generation: first, in my boyhood, as her pupil for piano lessons, later as her loyal and devoted friend, and in the end as her close helper and adviser. It is twenty-seven years almost to the day since it fell to my lot to close for ever the eyes of that gracious lady. . . .'

His voice had become softer, and he might have been speaking the last words for himself alone. Carlo gently broke into the reverie: 'I acknowledge with gratitude, Sir, all the love and friendship which you gave my dear aunt right till the end of her life.'

Schachtner bowed solemnly, and continued: 'The gracious Baroness told me shortly before she died that at her death a sealed parcel would come into my hands for safe-keeping. It was her explicit wish that this parcel, sealed and unopened, should be kept in the municipal archives of Salzburg until the hundredth birthday of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. If, Signore, you were still alive at that time, it was to be handed over to you. Should you, however, be no more among the living—these were the Baroness' precise instructions—then the parcel was to be destroyed unopened.'

Carlo Mozart smiled: 'Well, well, my dear Court Councillor, fortunately, as you can see, I am still among the living.' He had by now completely recovered from the excitement of his evening walk, and had followed his visitor's latest remarks with growing interest.

'Then, Sir', announced Dr Schachtner, rising from his chair and speaking with even greater solemnity, 'in fulfilment of the Baroness' wishes, I now hand you the parcel—the seal of which, may I point out, is still unbroken.' He placed the parcel in Carlo's hands, bowed deeply, and moved towards the door.

'It was an honour', he murmured. Then, pausing, he said hesitantly: 'May I, revered Signor Mozart, utter a modest personal request?' Carlo gave an encouraging nod.

'Tomorrow you will have a strenuous day, and the programme of our centenary celebrations will not leave our guest of honour a single free minute. But the day after tomorrow, Signore—Monday—my wife and I would deem it a great privilege if you would permit us to give you dinner in our house. And, should you consider me worthy of your trust, it would please me very greatly to hear something concerning the contents of this parcel. I hope I need not assure you that it is no mere base curiosity which prompts this request, but my very sincere interest in everything connected with the Mozart family, an interest I have inherited from my dear father and mother.'

'My dear Court Councillor', replied Carlo, 'you need say no more. It will give me great pleasure to have dinner with you on Monday, and to tell you something about the contents of our mysterious parcel, assuming'—he smiled—'that it seems proper to divulge such a long-kept mystery.'

Dr Schachtner bowed once more, and departed, leaving Carlo staring irresolutely at the Berchtold family's baronial seal. Giuseppe came into the room, bringing his master's slippers, and placed a bottle of wine and a glass on the table: 'From the landlord, Your Honour, with his compliments. An Austrian wine—Perchtoldsdorfer Spezial 1830.'

'Perchtoldsdorfer Spezial', echoed Carlo absently, as Giuseppe gently took the shoes off his master's feet. Having drawn the curtains, the old valet silently left the room, and Carlo, alone with the mysterious bequest from his father's sister, was seized with a sudden trepidation, a fear of reviving things long forgotten, of perhaps uncovering secrets which had slept peacefully for so many years. He seemed to sense the presence of Nannerl, the frail gracious old lady who had once shared the triumphs of her brother, Carlo's father. He hesitated a moment, and then, with a quick impulsive gesture, broke the seal and opened the parcel.

It contained two objects. One was a red Morocco case, in which reposed a quill of solid gold, adorned with a monogram of diamonds in the shape of the letter M. Beside it lay a book, bound in red Morocco and decorated with coloured pieces of mother-of-pearl. On its cover, and also executed in diamonds, shone the letter M.

Carlo turned over the leaves of the book, and his mind caught the echo of family talk a great many years ago concerning a diary which good old Aunt Nannerl was supposed to have kept; not that she had ever mentioned it to him. Now, as he riffled through the yellowed pages, he saw the hand-writing of his well-loved Aunt: the gracious flourish of the lettering written in the distant days before the French Revolution, becoming simpler, firmer and more forceful as the diary progressed and the years sped by, declining eventually into the quavering strokes of an old woman.

Here was the diary written by—what was Schachtner's phrase?—'the sister of the sublime Mozart'. Carlo poured himself a glass of wine, and sipped it thoughtfully. Then he dropped contentedly into an easy chair, and began to read.

BOOK ONE

26th May 1764—23rd September 1777

London, 26th May 1764

INSIDE St James' Palace the high, gold and white folding doors were flung open, and we four—Papa, Mama, Wolferl and I—stood for the second time before King George III, the young King of England, and his consort, Queen Charlotte. Next to them stood their Majesties' brothers and sisters, behind them officers, diplomats and the entire court. Papa bowed deeply, Mama and I curtsied; but Wolferl, the silly boy, instead of bowing as he had been told, went straight up to the King and called out in his best Salzburgian dialect: 'Well, well, here we are again—all four of us!'

Papa coughed in embarrassment, Mama and I blushed, the ladies and gentlemen of the court looked uneasily at each other—but the King only laughed, and answered: 'Welcome, Wolfgang, welcome back.' Then he turned to Papa and said: 'I am delighted, Herr Mozart, to greet you and your family once more in our home. With your last visit three weeks ago, and the little concert you presented then, you gave us all great pleasure. It was my dear wife's wish that I should ask you again, and this I have been extremely happy to do.'

With a gracious movement of his hand he indicated the piano, and while he and the Queen took their seats, Papa took my hand and led me towards the instrument. Mama and Wolferl sat down near the window, and Papa once more bowed deeply to the assembled company. 'Your Majesties', he began, 'Your Royal Highnesses, my Lords, Ladies and Gentlemen: the general admiration which the matchless skill and talent of my two children has aroused in the hearts and minds of all those who attend their concerts, the overwhelming praise which has been showered upon them not only by

Your Majesties but also by Her Majesty the Empress Maria Theresa of Austria, as well as His Majesty King Louis XV of France, His Highness the Elector Maximilian of Bavaria, His Eminence the Archbishop of Salzburg. . .

I felt Papa was protesting too much, as he so often does on these occasions, and I think the King did too, for at this point, though very politely, he interrupted Papa to remark: 'The astonishing successes achieved by your children are all well known to us, my dear Herr Kapellmeister. Perhaps now you would kindly start with the performance itself.'

Papa seemed a little put out, but continued, somewhat faster, with his presentation: 'In fulfilment of Your Majesty's most flattering wish, my little daughter Maria Anna, being in her twelfth year, will now render an outstandingly difficult sonata composed by the great Maestro, Domenico Scarlatti. In all modesty I may perhaps be permitted to mention that my daughter's virtuosity on the piano is unique in the whole of Europe.'

I sat down at the piano. ' . . . Being in her twelfth year', I thought as I began to play. 'I am now thirteen years old—why cannot Papa tell the truth? Why would he have people believe that Wolferl is only seven—when he had his eighth birthday last January? All these puffs Papa gives us remind me of the big fair at home in Salzburg and the people crying up their cattle before they can sell them.'

My fingers glided over the keys, and without much thought I played clearly, distinctly and in strict tempo, just as Papa had taught me in many toilsome lessons. And while I played, memories came to me of all the foreign countries through which we had travelled during these last months, of all the other concerts we had given before so many important personages.

It must have been about two years ago that we played at the Palace of Schönbrunn before our gracious Empress, Maria Theresa: Wolferl in his ceremonial dress of lilac-coloured silk with lace and gold braid, and the embroidered waistcoat he is so proud of; and I in my most beautiful gown of purple velvet with white brocaded taffeta, and a little wreath of spring flowers in my hair.

Many gorgeous halls we had to pass through before we came to the Imperial Family's private suite. All over the Palace we saw Imperial Guards, Hussars, Pandurs, standing stiffly to attention—rather like tin soldiers—in their red and white coats, with drawn

swords, shiny helmets and huge plumes. Footmen in black and gold liveries silently opened one door after another for us, until in the end we stood before Her Majesty herself.

Somehow I had imagined our Empress differently, perhaps older, stricter-looking. She reigns over a large strong realm, and Mama told me she is the mother of sixteen children. Of course I was excited—and a little afraid of her. But all the fear vanished when she greeted us, smiling at us with her kind blue eyes—a glorious clear blue, I thought, like the Salzburg sky on a spring day. First we made music for about an hour, then a splendid *fause* was served, lovely hot chocolate with cream heaped on top of it, all sorts of cakes with almonds and raisins, and little pastries with fancy decorations. Then the children of the Empress made music for us—for us, the Mozarts—playing the piano and singing duets and trios.

Just before we were to leave, Wolferl jumped into the lap of our Empress, put his little hands round her neck, and began to cover her with kisses. I could see Papa looking very anxious, and he stepped forward hastily to prevent further embraces from Wolferl. But the Empress did not seem at all annoyed, and told Papa: 'Let him be, Herr Mozart. The main thing is that he likes being here with us'—and then, in her turn, she gave my little brother a very hearty kiss back.

The day after this Her Majesty's private treasurer arrived where we were staying, bringing us children all manner of presents, toys, pastries and dresses, as well as the Imperial command to return next day to the palace. To our dear Papa, however, he handed a purse containing one hundred ducats! Well—one hundred ducats are more than four hundred guilders, which I think must be nearly as much as Papa earns at Salzburg in a whole year. My parents were so overjoyed they embraced each other, and nearly cried.

The success we had had at the Imperial Court soon became the talk of the day in Vienna, and secretaries, chamberlains and messengers kept coming to our house with invitations to *diners*, *soupers*, *soirées* and the rest. The English and French ambassadors, aristocrats like Prince Hildburghausen and Count Palffy, all wanted to present us to their guests, and often we were booked six, even eight days ahead. For each invitation Papa received ten ducats, and we children got sweetmeats, medallions, silver buckles and many other presents. Moreover, every afternoon, punctually at half past four, the Imperial



carriage, drawn by two snow-white horses, arrived in front of our house at the Hohe Brücke, and conveyed us to the Palace of Schönbrunn. This became a huge playground for us, and for four whole weeks we rushed about and played and laughed with the young princes and princesses. Their beautiful and costly toys became ours, and little Wolferl fell in love for the first time—with the young Archduchess Marie Antoinette, the Empress' youngest daughter.

She is about a year older than my brother, and we all called her Mitzi. Once, when we were playing catch-ball, Wolferl fell on the polished floor, and began to cry pitifully. So Mitzi helped him up, dried his tears with her little handkerchief, and gave him a kiss on the cheek. 'Thank you a thousand times, Mitzi', my little brother said to the princess, while the tears were still trickling down his face. 'You are such a kind, sweet girl, and when I grow up, I promise to marry you.' (Silly little boy!—as if even then everybody did not know that Mitzi, although only a child, was already destined as wife to the future King of France.)

At another time (we were all playing hide-and-seek, running from one room to the next), we almost ran into a slim and very handsome young man who was standing at a music desk playing the fiddle. 'Wrong notes, wrong notes!' Wolferl shouted at the stranger. 'Silly man, can't you hear that your E-string is tuned a quarter of a tone lower than the three others? Give it to me!' With that my impudent little brother took the violin and muttered to Mitzi as he began to tune it: 'This fellow will never become a real musician.'

The young man laughed. 'That, I can assure you, is by no means my intention', he said in a friendly enough tone. 'So you two are the famous Mozart children from Salzburg, aren't you? You, little rascal, are Wolfgang, and you, Mademoiselle, must be Nannerl.' (It was the first time in my life somebody had treated me as a young lady and called me 'Mademoiselle'.)

I curtsied deeply before the Crown Prince Joseph, as I now recognised him to be—he had the same very clear blue eyes as his mother—and Wolferl had suddenly become very quiet, because Mitzi had whispered something in his ear. Meekly he returned the fiddle to the Crown Prince: 'The E-string', he stammered, 'is now all right . . . and . . . I did not mean any harm . . . before. I am very sorry. . . '

'Ah well, my boy, anybody could say that', said the Crown Prince, and his eyes smiled, but it seemed to me that he had not quite got

over my brother's impertinence. A most beautiful young lady had just entered the room, and the Crown Prince winked in her direction. 'Punishment there must be', he said. 'You will now immediately sit down at the piano, and show the Crown Princess and myself whether you are really such a wizard as my mother tells me!'

So Wolferl went meekly over to the piano stool, and for the next hour or so executed all the tricks which people like to hear from him and which I personally find very childish. He asked to be shown a piece of music, which he then played *prima vista*, he improvised wildly on a theme which the Crown Prince gave him, he played blind-fold and then again with his hands under a napkin. He then seized the fiddle, and played some chords on it; had us strike some notes not only on musical instruments but also on glasses, bells and clocks—notes which he could exactly name when we played them. Finally he went to the little house-organ, and let loose all the manuals and even the pedal, which his tiny feet could only just reach.

Then he broke off, turned to the Crown Prince and asked: 'Are you still angry with me, Sir?' 'Can *anybody* be angry with him, Joseph?' said the Crown Princess to her husband with a laugh, as she caressed Wolferl's head. For quite a while the Crown Prince looked earnestly at her, then at the boy, and then at me—but he did not say a word.

Having finished the first movement of the Scarlatti sonata, I glanced for a second at my audience. George III said something to his Queen, at which she nodded and smiled. A tall young man who stood behind Their Majesties spoke softly to Papa in what looked a very friendly manner. I began the second movement, the *Pastorale*, returning to the keys—and to my thoughts.

I recalled the day we got back to Salzburg from Vienna. His Eminence the Archbishop Sigismund, sovereign of our little principality, ordered Papa to appear before him, and we all felt uneasy because Papa had been away from his duties as a player in the Court Orchestra for much longer than he had leave. But when we saw his beaming face on his return from the Residence, we knew immediately that he had good news for us; which indeed he had.

The Archbishop had wanted to hear about all our experiences in Vienna, about the Empress and the Crown Prince and everything else, and in the end he said: 'You and your children, my dear Mozart, have made us very proud indeed, and we hope that you will

continue to carry the fame of Salzburg all over the world. However, so that you can boast a worthy title when next you go on your journeys, we appoint you herewith our Archi-Episcopal Vize-Kapellmeister!' And not one word had been said about Papa exceeding his leave of absence.

Then in February of last year the horrible war, which had lasted for seven long years, came to an end. Papa admits that we Salzburgers had not noticed much of it, but he says everybody was breathing more freely because the war was over. Many evenings at that time he and Mama sat talking in whispers, as if they had some big plan in mind which must be carefully considered.

One day they let Wolferl and me into the secret. At the beginning of June we were all to go on a long journey, performing at princes' courts, in churches, public halls, and also at private parties. For a long time there had been talk in Salzburg about miraculous musical children who travelled all over Europe and aroused vast admiration, not to speak of the prodigious sums of money they made for their parents and sponsors. So our success in Vienna, together with Wolferl's amazing little tricks and my astonishing progress at the piano (I do not boast, for Papa called it that himself) gave him the idea of presenting us too to the great world.

Uncle Hagenauer shook his finger at Papa, and I saw them talking very seriously. (Of course he is not our real uncle, but only our landlord and Papa's banker and very best friend, but we call him 'Uncle' because he is so kind-hearted and we are all so fond of him.) Sometimes I could hear a couple of words from their conversation, like 'not very healthy for the children' or 'highly irregular way of life' or 'too much fatigue'—but in the end Papa seemed to have convinced Uncle Hagenauer that it was a reasonable undertaking.

At any rate we now made serious preparations for the journey. Wolferl and I had to practise twice as much as before, Papa wrote letters all over the world, and poor Mama had her hands full putting in proper order our clothing and other necessities for travelling.

Then our coach was bought. Not quite new, but still very passable, and Papa had it newly painted a golden yellow and the cushions recovered with soft velvet. It looked truly elegant, and as time went by we grew very fond of it; we soon christened it 'Aunt Matilda'.

'A most adventurous enterprise, Leopold', said Uncle Hagenauer to Papa at eight o'clock in the morning when we all stood in front of

the house in Drehgasse ready to leave. 'But by the grace of the good Lord the four of you will soon be back again, in good health, your pockets lined with gold, and world-famous!'

The neighbours had opened their windows; they smiled and called out to us, waving and wishing us Godspeed. Herr Zeni, the kindly grocer, gave Wolferl and me a bag of sweetmeats; Herr Reifenstahl, the apothecary at the corner, handed Mama a small bottle of smelling-salts; and Auntie Hagenauer did what she always does on these occasions—she shed a few tears. Her daughter Ursula, who is my best friend, embraced me: 'How I envy you, Nannerl! Paris, London—you lucky, lucky girl!'

A little aside from us stood Uncle Hagenauer's son, Kajetan, who is five years older than I am. He is a sweet-natured boy, and I am really fond of him, in spite of his very long nose. He would much like to become a musician, but Papa, who gives him violin lessons, believes it would be more reasonable for him to enter his father's banking business. He looked at me sadly with his big eyes, and I saw he would have liked to say something but could not find the right words.

Meanwhile other people had arrived to say goodbye to us, like Doctor Barisani, our physician, with his daughter Resi, who is my second-best friend, and Sally Joly, whom I call my third-best friend. She is an orphan and very poor, eating her dinner with a different Salzburg family every day, but she always seems in good spirits, extremely ready to laugh at anything she or anybody else says.

Then there was the Court Trumpeter, Herr Andreas Schachtner, who is not only a trumpeter but writes poems as well—a charming and dignified gentleman, 'and so terribly cultured', says Mama, because he is always kissing her hand in a very gallant way. (He cannot bear the sight of Sally, though, because she is so noisy and laughs so loudly. 'What a horrible child! How she gets on my poor nerves!' he exclaims if she ever comes near him, and he will put out his hands as if to defend himself from her.)

Oh yes, and there was also the Court Organist, Herr Adlgasser, wishing us the best of good fortune on behalf of all the members of the Court Orchestra. Then the coachman who was to drive us as far as Munich climbed up on his seat. Wolferl had already taken the place next to the coachman, and now he shouted out: 'All aboard, ladies and gentlemen, all aboard for Maxglan, Freilassing, Munich,

America, China!' Of course everybody in the street had to laugh at the silly boy, and perhaps it was better like that, for otherwise we should all have started crying just like dear Auntie Hagenauer. . . .

I came to the end of the *Pastorale*, and looked up. The King seemed to have liked it well enough, and he held the Queen's hand very lovingly in his own. "What a strange pair they are!" I could not help thinking. George III is tall, slim, elegant, and very lively, while his Charlotte is short, modest, not much to look at, and even humdrum. Three years ago, before they were married, she was just a little German princess, and Papa says, in one of his irreverent moods, that she looks as if she had never recovered from the surprise of suddenly becoming the Queen of England.

The last movement of the sonata was the *Capriccio*. It is quite difficult to play, and I am sure I ought to have watched my fingering and not thought about other things. But memories seemed to crowd in on me today, they would not let me go. Over there at the window sat Wolferl, next to Mama, fidgeting around on his little behind, obviously very impatient for me to finish my piece so that it would be his turn. I began on the *Capriccio*—but through the windows I saw the tops of the tall trees in St James' Park, and I had to think of Salzburg.

It is now almost a whole year since Matilda, our golden-yellow coach, turned from Drehhgasse into the Michaelsplatz—since I last saw Kajetan's kind, sad face and darling long nose. We have travelled many hundreds of miles in Matilda, passing by brooks, rivers and lakes, over high mountains and through green valleys, wide fields with ripe corn and deserted wasteland full of barren stubble. Often it was so hot we could hardly breathe, and often so icy cold the four of us had to huddle together so as not to freeze. Sometimes we slept in castles, in huge four-poster beds covered with silken eiderdowns—but sometimes on hard wooden benches in dirty village inns.

Sometimes people received us with great kindness, but sometimes they threw us roughly out of their houses. There are some rich princes in Germany, but many more are very poor indeed, and nearly all seem mean and even miserly. The Elector of Bavaria handed Papa a hundred ducats after our concert, but this was an exception, and most of them gave us any trivial gift they could lay hands on—so that we now have enough swords and watches and fruit knives and

rings and golden tooth-picks and laces and leather cases to open a stand at a fair.

We had to practise all the time we were travelling, so in Augsburg Papa bought us a new piano. We laughed when we first saw it because it was so tiny (it had to be, to go into Matilda), and because it had black keys where other pianos have the white ones and white keys where the others have black. But we soon became used to it, and today we are very proud when people consider it interesting and inspect it from all sides.

In Frankfurt, where Papa had planned only one concert, there was so much applause and admiration we had to give four. All the distinguished burghers of the city, musicians and music-lovers, complimented us—and for some reason I remember a good-looking boy of about fourteen who came to see us after the concert with his mother, wife of the Imperial Councillor Johann Caspar Goethe. He bowed to me with great courtesy, and had many kind things to say about my playing, which were very agreeable to hear even from a boy only a year older than myself.

From Frankfurt we travelled via Koblenz down the Rhine to mighty Cologne, and from there to Aix-la-Chapelle and Brussels; then along the new and pleasantly paved road straight to Paris. With open mouths we walked through the streets of the city, and it would take whole pages of this diary to describe the wonders I saw there. We gazed at the beautiful ladies' dresses, lined with valuable furs, and at the rich gentlemen's gaudily painted coaches. But we also looked with horror at the many cripples and blind, deformed or half-rotting beggars lying around in the streets and, even worse, in the churches.

'Paris is not a city, Herr Mozart', Monsieur Grimm declared to Papa, 'it is a whole world. Conquer Paris, and you have conquered the universe.' We had a letter of introduction to this Monsieur Grimm—he is a German who has lived in Paris for fifteen years. He is secretary to the Duc d'Orléans, and it seems that throughout France and the whole of Europe he is one of the most influential people in literature or music or art that we could hope to know. At any rate he took us immediately under his wing, arranged a concert for us, and himself sold about three hundred tickets for it. He even bought sixty candles so that the lights should look really festive.

'A darling of a man', said Mama, moved almost to tears by such

amiability. 'And so sensible', Papa added. Monsieur Grimm liked me, I must admit. He called me 'charming', and whenever I performed on the piano he never omitted to say a few polite or kind words like 'interesting', 'very exact' or 'astonishing'. But of course it was Wolferl he really admired. 'What a rare phenomenon!' he once exclaimed, in such an unnatural affected manner that I had to pull myself together if I was not to laugh right in his face. 'What a rare phenomenon! One has to see and hear it to believe it!' Perhaps I am being ungrateful, for he was certainly very good to us; yet somehow I did not like him.

I must say he introduced us thoroughly into Parisian Society, so that we met the beautiful Madame d'Épinay, the celebrated Monsieur Voltaire, and also Herr Johann Schobert, the famous composer. Monsieur Grimm wrote about us too in the French newspapers, and it was he who had us presented at the Court of Versailles.

On New Year's Day we played on a clavecin of pure gold in front of King Louis XV and Madame de Pompadour. It was an ice-cold day, and we were shivering horribly as we walked on thick Turkish carpets through the huge unheated halls of the palace, past gold-framed mirrors, high china vases and the most glorious pieces of furniture I have ever seen.

We were told that Madame Pompadour was the world's most beautiful and brilliant woman, and perhaps that's what she once was. But when I stood before her, I only saw a blonde, quite good-looking lady, somewhat plump, though, and no longer very young, who looked at us haughtily, without the slightest friendliness or even a smile. The King gave us a sign to start, but however hard we tried with our music, we could not thaw the icy atmosphere around us, and after only a few minutes His Majesty got up, gave us a quick superficial nod, and left the room.

Madame Pompadour immediately rose to follow him, and just at that moment little Wolferl—perhaps remembering our Empress Maria Theresa—ran towards her with his arms outstretched, meaning to kiss her. But she drew herself up and stopped him with a look of dismissal—it was a sad look too, I thought, but perhaps I am only imagining that now—and then, with a single proud gesture of her hand, pushed him violently away. 'Monsieur Mozart will be well advised', she said, half to Papa and half to the ladies and gentlemen around her, 'to teach his son better manners in future.' Then she too

left the room, and my poor little brother complained bitterly: 'Who is this that does not want to kiss me? The Empress kissed me.'

Three months later—we were at the time in Calais, waiting for the boat which was to bring us to England—all the bells of the little town suddenly began ringing. There was much singing and rejoicing, people embraced each other in the streets and danced gaily in the market square—and everybody kept shouting: '*La grande putain est morte*'.

Wolferl had picked up some French but did not know what '*putain*' meant, so he asked Mama. She was embarrassed, and told him it was not a polite word, but explained that not everybody had liked Madame de Pompadour, who had just died of smallpox. And perhaps, as I now think, it was not from a wish to hurt Wolferl that she would not let him come near her, but on the contrary because she did not want to put him in any danger from her own fatal disease.

'*Bravissimo!*' cried King George. The Scarlatti sonata was over, I had made my curtsy and sat down next to Mama. 'And now we would like to hear what young Master Wolfgang has to offer us.'

Wolferl jumped eagerly on the piano stool, played a few runs up and down—with his little fingers that could hardly reach a sixth—struck a few chords, turned his chubby face to his audience, and then said with an impudent smile: 'Well, ladies and gentlemen, let us begin.'

The King first asked him to accompany the Queen, who has quite a pleasant voice, in an aria by Dr Handel. She got up from her chair and walked heavily (as she is expecting a baby) over to the piano, where she took her place next to Wolferl. Hardly had she begun to sing when the boy interrupted her: 'A tiny bit too high, Your Majesty, is it not? Let's put it down a small third, shall we?' The Queen blushed, but he had already begun playing in the new key, and lo and behold—the Queen's voice sounded much lighter and more agreeable.

When she had finished her aria, the King sat down at the piano, Wolferl took his little fiddle, and they played together a duet by Tartini. Finally, the Queen's brother, who only a few days before had arrived from Germany, asked to hear Wolferl's famous tricks. So once more the good old napkin was brought, and my little brother,

admired as the world's greatest wonder, began to improvise with his fingers hidden. The listeners' enthusiasm knew no bounds at the end of the 'turn': the King tapped Papa on the shoulder with an air of great benevolence, the Queen exuberantly seized Mama's hand, and some of the court ladies were so excited they began embracing Wolferl and kissing him.

I stood aside from it all, having watched the little comedy too often before to find much new enjoyment in it. Suddenly a pleasant soft voice behind me said: 'My compliments, Mademoiselle Mozart!' It was the good-looking gentleman who during my performance had stood behind Their Majesties and next to Papa. 'And my most sincere admiration', he went on, 'for the cleverest virtuoso on the piano.'

I was about to utter a polite 'Thank you', when the King clapped his hands. 'Ladies and gentlemen', he said, 'the performance has not yet come to its close. I have here in my hands the manuscript of a new rondo which the composer put to paper only yesterday, and which he has purposely spiced with all sorts of difficulties and pitfalls.' The King looked smilingly around his guests. 'Let us now see what our young friend Wolfgang can do with it *prima vista*'—and with a slight bow he handed my brother the piece of music.

The listeners had returned to their seats. Papa would have liked to take a brief look at the manuscript, but Wolferl was already at the piano, and now played through the piece, apparently quite unconcerned about the many difficult passages, runs and arpeggios. All through it, and especially in the glorious *fortissimo* climax, my little brother played with a depth of feeling and passion I had never heard from him before. It is not too much to say he seemed truly inspired; it made me feel first hot and then ice-cold. I saw Mama looking at Papa in utter astonishment, and I could sense that everyone else in the room was stunned and breathless at the brilliance and fire of the performance they had just heard.

The last note had sounded, yet nobody dared applaud. Then Wolfgang let his hands drop from the keys. 'Thunder and lightning!' he breathed, amidst the complete silence, 'what a horribly hard piece to play!' At this the enthusiasm broke loose, and if the King had not quickly stepped in front of the boy to save him, they could almost have crushed him.

He seemed himself still in the spell of the music. 'What a damned

fine piece that rondo is', he said at last. 'Beastly difficult, but wonderfully written, a beautiful thing.'

'This you may tell to the composer', said the King, and beckoned to the tall young man who had paid me that charming compliment some minutes before. 'Here he is in person: our dear Professor Christian Bach.'

Of course we had heard of Professor Bach before. Papa had told us he was the son of a Leipzig church cantor and organist; the father was famous all over Germany and the son had been very successful as a composer in Italy. Finally he had come to London as 'Master of the Queen's Musicke'—so they call it—at the Court of George III, succeeding the great Dr Handel. (This Dr Handel, of whom everyone here talks with great respect and admiration, died only five years ago, mourned by the whole of London.) Now, since the Master of the Queen's Musicke has the duty of arranging the musical diversions at Court, we have indeed Professor Bach to thank for our opportunity to give concerts at St James' Palace.

He walked gaily towards my brother, and made him a deep bow, only it was not quite a serious one. 'May an admiring composer', he said, 'pay homage to his brilliant interpreter in such a manner as his heart prescribes?'—and with a sudden powerful grip he took Wolferl in his arms, lifted him up, threw him right into the air, and caught him very cleverly—much to the amusement of all present.

Wolferl let out a truly Salzburgian 'Yoo-hooo!' and then shouted: 'Oh, that's lovely, that's wonderful! Now I know such a lot of composers', he exclaimed. 'Old Herr Wagenseil in Vienna, the Maestro Jommelli in Stuttgart, Monsieur Philidor in Paris—but such a merry blade I've never met before. Listen, Herr Bach: I herewith appoint you my favourite composer!'

After that, of course, everybody started laughing again, but Wolferl hardly saw anybody or anything except Herr Bach, whose sleeve he held firmly, talking on and on, refusing to let his new friend go. First he wanted to know how pieces like this rondo are written, how they are constructed, how put down on paper. He told Herr Bach he had already composed a number of little minuets and gavottes, and had even started to write a concerto for the piano.

I expected the Master of the Queen's Musicke to smile at this, because I knew all about Wolferl's childish scribbings; but the Professor listened gravely and attentively to everything the boy said,

answered his questions, and in the end even invited Wolfgang, with Papa's permission, to come and see him one afternoon and have a chat about everything my brother wanted to know or might find interesting.

After the concert all of us were asked to the royal table, but apart from the fine table-cloths, the napkins, the plates with the golden border, the heavy silver cutlery and the glasses of crystal, there was not much that was royal about it. 'One should never eat or drink more than is absolutely necessary', the King pronounced, and put on everybody's plate a very thin slice of boiled beef (without gravy) and a spoonful of sauerkraut. Wolferl would have liked another helping, but a severe look from Papa stopped him from asking for one. Instead of a dessert everyone was given a glass of barley water, which tasted rather dull and stale.

During the meal the talk was mostly about music, and the King told us how the great George Frederic Handel had laid his hands on his (the King's) head, when the King was only a boy of twelve, and had said to him: 'You are a good boy—you will protect my music when I die.'

After the meal was over, the King asked us all to come with him to his private study where he had prepared a surprise for us children; when we came there, first the Queen handed Wolferl a case covered with dark red leather, adorned with rich jewellery. 'Open it, Wolfgang', she said to him, and my brother did as he was told.

The next moment he let out a yell of surprise and joy. On red velvet, glorious to look at, lay a writing quill of pure gold, and on the quill, in a monogram, shone the letter M. 'A writing quill!' he shouted, quite overcome, I could see, by the jewels and rich colours.

'Yes', said the Queen, 'a writing quill. May it bring you luck, Wolfgang, and may everything you write with it, music and words, joyful things and sad, important thoughts or ideas and every-day letters and notes, be for the good of yourself and your family!'

Then she bent down to him, took his head into her hands and kissed him on the forehead. Wolferl stood there with his eyes lowered, and for a moment I was afraid he might begin to cry. But he fought bravely against the tears, and at last said softly, very softly: 'Thank you . . . thank you very much, Your Majesty.'

After that the King came to me. In his hand he held a huge book,

bound in dark red leather (just like Wolferl's case) and adorned with mother-of-pearl jewellery. There was the same letter M, made from shining diamonds, on its cover, just like the one on the writing quill. 'This, my dear Nannerl', said the King solemnly, 'is a diary. It is meant for you to chronicle truthfully in its pages everything that may happen to you, to your brother and your family. It is not always an easy task to find the truth; so should you one day not know exactly what is true, then try at least to give the truth as your heart sees it.'

And now he too bent down to me, and kissed me on the forehead. My heart was beating so loudly I was afraid it might burst, and I saw I was not much braver, or for that matter more grown-up, than my eight-year-old brother. I too could do no more than mutter a brief: 'Thank you, Your Majesty'—in a tone so low I am sure he could hardly have heard it.

It is now nine o'clock at night, and I, Maria Anna Mozart, commonly called Nannerl, thirteen years of age and born in Salzburg, am sitting here at the window of our London apartment. For more than an hour I have gone on writing in my new diary—because it has been a memorable day and because so much has happened to write about—my new diary which George III, King of England, gave me this very afternoon.

Soon it will be so dark that I shall have to stop. Out in the street—we live in a smart and comfortable house in Frith Street, Soho, belonging to a Mr Williamson—it has now become quiet. The Italian hurdy-gurdy players, the street-sellers and hucksters have all gone, and only far away can I sometimes hear the shouting of some returning reveller.

Over there, in his little bed near the door, Wolferl is sleeping peacefully, and at times he gives a loud snore. His cheeks are still quite red from all the excitement he has been through today, and in his hands he grips firmly the quill the Queen has given him. As happens every night, I washed his neck and cleaned his ears, rubbed his back with a flannel and put on his funny nightshirt with the red and pink spots; whereupon he said to me: 'Thank you so much for everything, dearest little sister of my heart.' And tonight he said it with such particular sweetness and sincerity that I had to love him more than ever.

Then he called for Papa and Mama, and began the unchanging

ceremony of saying Good-Night. Papa lifts him on a chair, and amidst much laughter they start singing together a silly canon, with words and music just as both occur to them. After this Wolferl kisses Papa with great tenderness on the tip of his nose, and announces: 'When I grow up, I shall buy a huge glass case, and put my darling Papa inside it, so that all the Emperors and Kings of the world shall admire him. Because immediately after the dear Lord comes my own Papa!'

Papa has just been here in our room, putting his wig on the milliner's block. 'Is my dear daughter still writing?' he asked me affectionately. 'I hope you will not hurt your lovely eyes.'

It is now quite dark outside, and this great London has become very quiet. I shall go to bed; I feel tired. . . .

London, 1st June 1764

PRACTICE, practice, practice. . . .

The whole morning and the whole afternoon we sit at the piano with Papa: scales, studies, finger-practice. Often at night we are utterly exhausted. Too tired to eat, we prefer to go to bed hungry. But Papa says it has got to be, for we have two big public concerts ahead of us, and on their success our whole future will depend.

London is a very expensive place, and the fifty guineas (five hundred guilders in our money) which the King gave us for our appearance in St James' Palace were quickly spent. For Papa and Wolferl new and fashionable dresses had to be made, dresses from light brown English material, and hats for Mama and myself, because we would not dare to show here the ones we brought with us from Salzburg, they would make us look ridiculous. Our apartment costs one guinea a week, the food about twice as much. For a box at the Opera you pay two guineas, and the chair-carriers who bring us every morning to the lunch-time promenade, from Soho to St James' Park, get half a guinea each day.

At this promenade everybody meets everybody else in London Society: there you may see all the great gentlemen, the ladies, the

leading men of state, the writers, painters and musicians—but also the rascals and pickpockets! You walk on beautifully kept lawns between flowers and hedges, you may even sit down on the grass beneath shady trees, you laugh, greet your friends and exchange a few polite words with them. We Mozarts do it very fairly now, exactly like all the English people, and we no longer find it difficult to nod or bow to the right and the left, saying ‘Good morning, Ma’am’ and ‘How d’you do, Sir?’ Often entirely strange people come up to us, enquiring after our health and how we like it in London. Yes, we Mozarts have become quite a feature of London life in the five weeks we have sojourned here.

But if among the folk sauntering in St James’ Park there were any who still did not know who we four were—I am sure they must now know us very well. For this afternoon at about one o’clock the court carriage appeared at the promenade with the King and Queen in it; and though we were wearing entirely different clothes, Their Majesties recognised us and acknowledged our salutations. The King even opened the window and looked out of it, smiled amiably, and greeted Wolferl especially with a wave of his hand.

Of course everybody noticed the scene, and hardly had the carriage driven past when people gathered around and congratulated us. They asked about our concerts, when and where they were to take place, and where tickets could be bought. Papa replied politely to all the questions, and I felt it was an effort for him not to start immediately with the advance sales.

Our good Professor Bach also came to the promenade today, very trim and smart in his dove-tail coat, and buckles with precious stones on his shoes. He was surrounded by a dozen or so young ladies, all in flowing skirts with lace scarves round their shoulders and huge coloured hats on top of their carefully dressed hair. He introduced us to them—they included opera singers, daughters of the aristocracy and other young ladies of high birth—and they seemed very charmed and delighted, promising to come with their cavaliers to our concerts.

I stood a little apart from the group, and all of a sudden I had the strange feeling that everything I saw was unreal: the beautiful English park, the King, Papa, Mama, Wolferl, Herr Bach, all the affected gentlemen with their lorgnons or ‘quizzing glasses’, the chatting ladies, London, everything! It was as if I were sitting in

a theatre and watching a comedy or an opera . . . or even better: a masked ball.

And perhaps London is really one big masked ball: a throng of hurrying, laughing, dancing people, in beautiful, elegant masks. I can see them jostling each other at the end of the wonderful avenue which is called The Mall, where Buckingham House stands, private residence of the King (he withdraws there whenever he wishes to retire from the heavy work of reigning). On the lawn in front of the house a small crowd is watching the King's cows being milked and his chickens fed.

I look at the mass of people below the park, where Westminster Abbey stands, that mighty cathedral where kings and queens and great statesmen and soldiers and poets are buried, and on my right I can see as far as the coloured turnpikes which lead across the fields of Knightsbridge to the surrounding villages of Kensington, Chelsea and Richmond. Behind me is Piccadilly—the heart of the world, as they say here—with crowds thronged together in a never-ending stream.

Papa tries to make me believe a Golden Age has begun in England, and tells me the young King is eager to remove anything in his realm which is still bad or unhealthy, so that he can rule over a truly happy and contented people. I am sure King George is a good and great man, and would like to do this. But I expect Papa does not realise how much a mere girl of thirteen will notice, and many things I have seen and heard in London show me that Papa's golden age is a long way off, and that many years will have to pass before the King's beautiful dreams can cor. true.

Never at home in Salzburg did I even guess there could be such frightening differences between rich and poor as there are in London. I was told of young blades who in a single night lose ten thousand guineas at the gaming-table, and I also heard of a starving old woman who stole two pounds of potatoes and was sentenced to twenty years hard labour. Often in broad morning daylight I have seen a carriage full of drunken rakes with their womenfolk, returning from their night's carouse, and often in the evening I have seen wretched little children with premature wrinkles in their faces returning worn out from the heavy work they have been doing throughout the long day.

Regularly now the mail-coaches drive out from London to the country in all directions, and I am told the express coach takes only

seventeen days to Edinburgh. But there are often highwaymen who attack the passengers on the road and rob them of all their possessions. The King and his judges have their hands full trying to rid the country of these dreadful thieves, who do not seem deterred by the very heavy sentences imposed on those who are caught. Last week, with about eighty thousand other people, we watched twenty such criminals being hanged at Tyburn. Their wretched corpses are not buried, but, as a warning to others, are left there hanging for weeks and weeks, until they rot.

I do not know if there is another city in the whole world where so many drunkards are to be seen in the streets, and this is perhaps not very surprising either, for, as I overhear people assuring my parents, there are many thousands of gin-shops, and in any one of these a man may get enough liquor for a single penny to make himself fully drunk. But of course you do not notice any of these ugly things when you are sitting at a concert in Ranelagh Gardens, drinking your cup of chocolate at the famous Cocoa-Tree Club, watching a cock-fight in Vauxhall, or listening to an opera at the Drury Lane or the King's Theatre.

The Opera is given every Tuesday and Saturday, and we have been there five times already. Each time we saw a different opera, but always by the great Dr Handel, and each time the theatre was packed right to the last seat. Wolferl loves Handel's music and cannot have enough of it. To me it seems noble and solemn, but a little slow and (to be honest) even dull at times. So I amuse myself during the performances (while fat, elderly ladies trill their coloraturas, and weighty gentlemen in Roman or Biblical dresses blare their arias) by watching the audience.

Every theatre has three circles. In the top circle sit the servants, coachmen and chair-carriers; in the other two, and in the boxes and the stalls, right up to the stage itself, sit the ladies and gentlemen. The intervals are often longer than the acts, and one would have to be blind not to notice the young aristocrats flirting with ladies of easy virtue, and also with young boys whose faces are made up and painted. . . . You can even, in these intervals, be served with coffee and all sorts of delicacies, and this, it seems, has been the custom for some time now. ('A wonderful new arrangement', a wit said to Papa the other day. 'I would indeed recommend it for churches with inconstant congregations.')

The hanged highwaymen at Tyburn, the strollers in St James' Park, the tipplers in the gin-shops and the enthusiasts in the theatres, the cows in front of Buckingham House and the cocks in Vauxhall, exhausted working children and painted young boys, Italian clowns and French cocottes, wide green lawns and dirty little back-streets, sedan chairs, coaches, crowds, noise—that is London!

How very different is our little principedom of Salzburg. There, between the snow-clad tops of the Alps and silvery blue lakes, there is little noise and hardly any thronging, jostling crowds. We have no highwaymen and no starving people—perhaps we are out of date! We enjoy processions and a certain amount of pomp; but we are also proud of our chestnut trees on the banks of the Salzach, and of the marble walls in the Untersberg. Opera we have only rarely, but every Sunday we nearly split our sides laughing at the puppet-show.

Our rich people are not licentious and our poor citizens are not outlaws, our servants do their work without grumbling, and our aristocrats are moderate and friendly. Above all of them reigns our Prince, the good Archbishop Sigismund, Primate of Germany, legate of the Papal curia. He is nearly seventy years old, but is still fond of everything new and young. He is fatherly and pious, and like the good priest of a small village he knows each Salzburger by name. Wherever there is help to be given, he helps; and I think no one has ever seen him in anger, or haughty.

His great passion is music, and the Archi-Episcopal orchestra is larger and more famous than even that of our Empress in Vienna. We have three Kapellmeisters, three organists and three Court Composers, fifty musicians, many solo singers and choristers, *castrati* and choir-boys, and of course all the necessary organ-builders, fiddle-makers, copyists and librarians. A whole army of people, whose work it is to make music at court and in the churches, all for the delight and joy of our Prince-Archbishop.

But the leader of the great orchestra—is my Papa.

THE Mozarts are drunk! Not, to be sure, on some cheap gin, or on the thick, sweetish English beer which I have sometimes been obliged to taste. No, we are drunk with the heady feeling of popular success.

Papa looks a foot taller when he walks down Charing Cross Road. With his right hand he waves an affable greeting to all the passing chair-bearers, and smiles kindly at the pretty girls who sell oranges. If somebody greets him, which happens almost every minute, he draws his cocked hat politely, but does not sweep it too low. And when he stands before some aristocratic gentleman, he certainly bows, but not as deeply as some weeks ago—though still a little deeper than Herr Bach, who talks with princes and dukes and earls and lords as if he were one of them.

Mama's eyes sparkle if somebody pays her compliments about her children. Her cheeks become even redder than usual, and her dear nose begins to shine mightily. Wolferl, of course, considers himself the centre of the universe, and to hear him talk you would believe he had all but invented music. It is the fault of these foolish women who are always around him spoiling him, bringing him sweets and other presents.

And I myself? It is not given to me to shout with joy and exult as the others do. I cannot radiate and sparkle, but deep in my heart I know how blissfully happy I am at the good fortune which has come to us in this wonderful city. I can scarcely believe it is all true: the compliments everybody pays us, the money which pours down on us, the great people who invite us into their houses—an unreal fairy tale, one long, single dream. Every night I kneel down at my bedside, thanking God for all the favours which He grants to us four every day, and I implore Him not to let me wake—but to let me dream on and on. . . .

We were terribly frightened[†] when we came to Spring Gardens, where we were to play in the great hall. Three hours before the concert was to begin, the square was already full of people pushing and thronging to get in. First we were a little disappointed when we saw that most of them were only lackeys, coachmen, valets and chamberlains, but soon it was explained to us that the ladies and gentlemen

send their servants beforehand, to keep their seats. Papa was more excited than I have ever seen him before, and this I could well understand, for in the first hour alone he sold about one hundred guineas worth of tickets! And still the people kept on coming in. Soon some special chairs and even benches had to be brought in, and when even these did not prove sufficient—the listeners simply went up to the platform and crowded round the piano.

First Papa addressed the audience, telling them how wonderfully gracious and kind the King and Queen and many other high personages had been to us, then describing our early life, and our success at the court in Vienna. 'And now, my lords, ladies and gentlemen', he concluded, raising his voice for the climax, 'I present to you the greatest European miracle of our time—nay, the world's greatest miracle: the children Wolfgang and Maria Anna Mozart!'

This was the signal for a vast degree of shouting, whistling and applause, so that it took five whole minutes, I dare say, before the performance itself could begin. We played for three hours: Wolferl put on all his famous tricks, and people simply would not go home for wanting more. Only after Papa announced that a second '*Concerto al nostro Profitto*' would soon take place, and that every day between twelve and two o'clock we should be at home and anyone who paid five shillings would be welcome to listen to as well as examine us—only then did the hall start to empty.

Papa tells me that apart from gifts and invitations we have so far made three hundred guineas in London, and I grow quite giddy when I try to calculate how much that means in our money, and how long we could live on such a sum in Salzburg. But alas we are far away from Salzburg, and it might be some time before we return there, so Papa did the wisest thing he could do: first he paid all we owed anybody here, then he put aside a sum for our living expenses, and finally he sent a hundred guineas to Uncle Hagenauer—money put by 'for a rainy day', as the English phrase has it.

Mama always calls me a father's child, and I am proud to be one. Because for me Papa is the most wonderful person in the world. They say I resemble him in looks, also that our characters are similar; and if this be true, I do not wish for anything better. He is very handsome, and for all his modesty his bearing has the pride of a man who knows the value of his own talents—and his children's. He is kind and good-hearted, and we three are his whole world.

I know quite well that others, if you asked them, might say different things about him. Our Archbishop might complain that he often exceeds his leave of absence, and is not too interested in his orchestral duties. Uncle Hagenauer might mock at his exaggerated love for order and his little vanities, might even call him a pedant. Mama perhaps might sometimes sigh secretly when he seems a shade imperious, so that nobody is permitted to contradict him. Herr Bach, I fear, is inclined to consider him a dry type of musician, who insists too much on strict adherence to the old rules. All these aspects of him may be there, yet for me he remains the model of all a man should be: upright, strong, affectionate and wise. In our little family his will is certainly law.

He told me yesterday that it is just thirty years since he came from Augsburg to Salzburg as a young lad. He was to study at the University and become a clergyman, but he was always immersed in music. First he earned his livelihood by singing in church choirs and giving lessons, and then, because he could not make a fair living in this way, he became valet and private musician to a rich count, until one day the Archbishop made him a member of his orchestra.

For many years Papa was hopelessly in love with Mama, who was then Anna Pertl, daughter of a magistrate in St Gilgen, on the banks of lovely Lake Wolfgang. As a magistrate is a man of great importance, my grandfather perhaps hoped for something better for his daughter than a poor musician. But there were Anna and Leopold, deeply in love, and quite determined on marriage. So in the end grandfather had no choice but to let them wed, and never before—this is what Auntie Hagenauer says—was there a more handsome couple in the whole of Salzburg.

Yes, Mama is a beautiful woman, perhaps a little short and on the stout side, but with such gay, sparkling eyes, rich light-brown hair and the most beautiful hands you could imagine. She laughs all day long, and anybody who is with her is bound to laugh too. There is no one in the whole of Salzburg who is not charmed by the 'Mozartin', as everybody there calls her. Nor for that matter is there anybody who will go on sulking when Mama smiles at him.

After their wedding she and Papa moved into the Hagenauers' house in Drehgasse, and in seven years she bore him seven children, one after the other—Wolferl and I are the only ones that remained alive. And though I was only five at the time, I can still recall very

clearly the day my little brother was born—with the snow lying about six feet deep in the streets, and an icy piercing wind scouring the whole town.

The good Dr Barisani had been three hours already at Mama's bedside, and you could still hear her cries of pain. Auntie Hagenauer sat holding my hand and softly stroking my hair. Papa stood in front of the window, with his hands pressed together behind his back, gazing anxiously into the snow-storm outside. From time to time I could hear him murmur: 'Help us, Holy Maria, blessed Mother of God, help us!'

Then the doctor came into the room, with the sweat pouring down his face. 'Come in, Mozart, quickly', he called. Mama's cries had suddenly stopped, and everything in the house was frighteningly quiet. Auntie Hagenauer went to the door and listened—nothing. I tried to look at her—I wanted to ask her something—but she kept her eyes lowered, stared at the floor, and did not say anything.

Then the door opened, and Papa came in. Tears were running down his cheeks, and in his arms he held a little bundle. He walked towards me: 'A little brother has arrived, Nannerl . . . look!' Wolferl's face was a dirty yellowish colour, and wrinkled like the face of a very old man. He was so thin and small I was afraid even to look at him. I hid myself behind Auntie Hagenauer's apron, and began to cry.

The next day, though the snowstorm had not stopped—indeed it was raging worse than ever—Papa wrapped Wolferl in heavy blankets, took him in his arms and went out of the door. I heard Auntie Hagenauer stop him on the stairs and ask where in Heaven's name he was carrying the baby. 'To the cathedral, Marie', Papa answered, 'to have him baptised! If the poor creature has to die, he might as well die a Christian . . .'—and he ran off.

After an hour or so he was back again, shivering and covered with snow. 'His name', Papa declared to me solemnly, 'is Johannes Chrysostomus Wolfgang Gottlieb. And as he lived through his first little journey, he might live through many worse things!' I looked at my brother, and just then he opened his eyes, appearing almost as if he would smile at me. And I was not afraid of him any more.

After that I could not be with the baby enough, so my little brother and I grew up very close to each other. Before he could walk, he used to listen intently when I played the piano, and to Papa's

delight it was soon obvious that he was going to love music as much as I did. He even invented short pieces at the piano which Papa jotted down on paper, and then there is the famous 'family story' of the concerto he wrote at the age of four. I have so often heard Papa telling this story to friends that I almost have it by heart.

He and Herr Schachtner came home from High Mass one morning to find Wolferl sitting at the writing desk with a pen. 'And what do you think you are doing?' Papa asks him. 'Writing a concerto for the piano', says Wolferl; 'the first part is nearly finished.' 'Let me see', says Papa, and Wolferl tells him: 'Not ready yet.' 'Let me see', repeats Papa, 'that must be something proper'—and he takes the sheet of music paper from the boy and shows it to Herr Schachtner.

What the two grown-ups see, as Papa tells the story, is a daubing of notes written mostly over blots of ink that have been smeared away. For little Wolferl, knowing no better, has dipped his pen down to the bottom of the inkpot so that as soon as he touches the paper there is bound to be a blot. The boy disperses the blot with his outstretched hand and at once continues to write over it.

'But then, Herr Bach', Papa goes on—for it is to Professor Bach that I last heard him telling it—'I began to study the notes, the composition, and when I did, I nearly cried for joy and wonder. No one could possibly have played it, but the astonishing thing was that it was set correctly and regularly according to all the musical rules. When I said to Herr Schachtner it was too hard for any human being to play, Wolfgang interrupted me: "That is why it is a concerto, which has to be practised day and night till it is right. See, this is how it goes." Then he played it, but was able to make only just enough of it to let us guess what he was attempting. . . .'

Of course Papa spent even more time after this on Wolferl and his teaching, and Wolferl was always scribbling out little pieces in my exercise book which I was to admire. So that although in a way I too was very proud of having such a prodigy for a brother, I was also a little sad sometimes that he could play as well as I could, *and* write music, while I could only play and never invent the beautiful harmonies for myself. And Papa, though he has never made a favourite of either of us, will often be talking more of Wolferl than of me—as if this small brother of mine were truly, and not just for public praising, something very extraordinary.

THAT was a very great anxiety we had with Papa. For three long weeks he was between life and death, often without consciousness, shaken by fever and unable to utter a single word.

It all began on that unhappy evening in July when Lord Taneth invited us to come and play at his house. First we could not find a coach, and Papa was glad to procure a sedan-chair. He put Wolferl and myself in it, and as the weather was fine and warm he walked behind us. The London chair-carriers, however, are rather quick; Papa did not want to leave us alone, so he ran with them, and began to sweat heavily. In Lord Taneth's drawing-room the doors and windows were wide open, as everywhere here, and the night was a cool one. When, about midnight, we arrived home, Papa could hardly stand.

First it was only an ordinary cold, but then his throat, nose and ears became inflamed, he could hardly breathe, and the doctor feared his lungs might be affected. We remained anxiously at his bedside for many days and nights, and by the beginning of August he at last seemed to have come through the worst. On doctor's orders we put Papa in a comfortable coach, left London with all its dirt, smoke and fog, and moved to a lovely little village on the banks of the river Thames, called Chelsea.

Here we now live, in a tiny cottage in a lane called Five Fields Row. There is a small garden, and from it, if I get up on tiptoe, I can see over to many glorious palaces and castles on the other side of the river. Papa has to sleep as much as he can; we are not allowed to play the piano, and we are to speak mostly in whispers, so as not to disturb him. The other day Wolferl came over and said to me very softly: 'Nannerl, the Queen gave me a golden writing quill, and now I want to give her in return something I have written with it. I am composing a symphony!'

A symphony! He writes a concerto at four, and now at eight he has come on to symphonies! Silly little boy, I thought, he cannot have an inkling what 'symphony' means, but having heard it somewhere thinks to impress me by using the word.

Yet somehow he found himself a heap of music-paper, settled down and started writing. At times he would jump up from the table and dance round the room, humming and beating time with the Queen's golden quill. 'No ordinary quill', he broke off to tell me once. 'You can't write mere minuets or rondos with the Queen's quill, you feel like putting on paper something special, something great!'

Another time (I was baking a raisin-cake in our kitchen) he called out to me: 'I say, Nannerl, do remind me to give the French horns something really good to blow in the third movement.' But I was out of temper, and called back: 'You stupid boy, who do you think you are? Haydn perhaps, or Dittersdorf or Stamitz?' 'No, Nannerl', he answered me gravely, 'but after all, I am Mozart.'

Of course it is all Bach's fault the boy has grown so swollen-headed. Two or three times a week he comes out to our cottage in Chelsea, greets Mama and me, enquires hastily after Papa's health, and then goes off into the garden with Wolferl. There they sit together for hours on end, and when I once asked the boy what they talked about all the time, he answered: 'We are talking secrets, sister dear. Herr Bach tells me all the great secrets of music. He knows them all, you may be sure.'

I looked somewhat astonished, so he repeated: 'Yes, he knows them all, and do you know where he learnt them? From his father, who was called Johann Sebastian, and who died a beggar, so Herr Bach told me, because he lived simply to write music. And that was wrong, Herr Bach says, and we two must not make the same mistake. No, Nannerl, he and I must write music in order to live, do you understand? Not live to write music, but write music to live.'

The next day (Herr Bach had again come to Chelsea) I summoned up all my courage and spoke to him. He was sitting under the old oak tree, and I asked him straight out why he must put such big ideas into Wolferl's head.

'Your brother, Mademoiselle Mozart', he answered me, 'is still a child, as yet unpolished and precocious, but he begins to understand his craft. He thirsts for knowledge like a true genius, and perhaps it is my destiny to satisfy this thirst. Perhaps I was born to be—a bridge.'

'A bridge, Herr Bach?' I asked in surprise.

He looked at me with his big kind eyes. 'Yes, a bridge: between

the old music and the new, between Johann Sebastian Bach and Wolfgang Mozart.'

First I could only laugh at this, but then I began to think about what he had said. Of all the people I have met on our travels, Herr Bach to me is the most agreeable. He is always kind, friendly and polite, and although he is very successful and influential, he is never haughty or arrogant. He is a great composer, but also a man of the world who has seen much and met many people. Can Wolferl's little tricks have bewitched even such a man as Christian Bach? No, he knows too much about music to be thus deceived.

What then does the great Professor Bach see in my little brother? Often I lie in bed, unable to sleep. I gaze up at the ceiling, and think and think . . . am I unfair to Wolferl? Is there more in him than my eyes can see? Or more than my heart wishes to admit? Do I envy my own brother his talents and success?

For the last week Papa has been well again. He sits with us in the garden, he practises with us, he again writes his letters to all the world, and makes plans for the coming winter. Yesterday after breakfast he called Wolferl and me into his room, and informed us that we were to have a very important visitor, the celebrated Dr Daines Barrington, Professor of Biology and Physiology, and a true light of science. The Doctor, it seemed, had heard much about Wolferl, and as the explanation of complicated natural phenomena is his particular line, he wished to subject Wolferl to a strict and thorough scientific examination.

'Well', said Mama in her easy-going way, 'if I understand my dear husband, all that swollen stuff, translated into the common Salzburgian language, means that the Herr Doctor Professor considers our Wolfgang a humbug . . .' We all laughed, and Papa admitted: 'It will be something of the sort, my dear.'

An hour later we saw two very strange figures approaching our cottage. The nearer they came, the more they reminded me of two comic characters from our Salzburg puppet-show: the foolish old Master Pantaloon and his simple-minded servant Scapino. The worthy Dr Barrington, who walked stiffly in front, was an odd, thin little man with huge glasses on his nose and a great wig with black locks on his head. In his left hand he balanced a stick which reached up to his shoulders. To the top of this stick was fixed a silver box

from which he was continually taking snuff. Three or four yards behind him came Scapino, who turned out to be his secretary, laden with papers, books, an inkstand, and about a dozen pens and quills.

The two strangers took their seats with great fuss at a little table, and we stood before them, all four of us, just as if we were standing in front of a judge. Because of the heat the celebrated Doctor had taken off his black wig, which now afforded us a view of his polished bald head. He put the stick in a corner, after unscrewing the snuff-box and placing it in front of him. The secretary had meanwhile spread all the papers around him on the table, the chairs and even the floor. He now drew one of the pens and held it poised, as if ready to take down every single word that was to be spoken during the proceedings.

Pantaloon took a pinch of snuff, waited for three seconds, sneezed very noisily with evident satisfaction, and then started: 'The name Daines Barrington, I may say in all modesty, enjoys in the world of science the same illustrious fame as that of Milton in literature, Handel in music or Watteau in art. My eminent writings, as for instance the paper on How to Reach the North Pole, or Were there Turkeys in Europe before Columbus?, or Why is the Sea-water Salty?—these are among the most truly profound works of philosophy and natural science written in our century. I am glad to be able to state that they have even been translated into many foreign languages, such as the Bulgarian and the Albanian.'

Mama nudged me in the ribs, and I could not help giggling loudly, whereat the great scientist regarded me above his spectacles with surprise and reproach, took further snuff, sneezed, and continued: 'After extensive observations of the phenomenon Wolfgang Mozart in two public concerts as well as in a private seance, I have come to the indisputable conclusion that in no circumstances whatsoever can one allow the present above-mentioned subject of my studies to be a child aged eight. Now, Leopold Mozart'—he turned dramatically to Papa—'you who claim to be the father of the said subject, what have you, pray, to say to that?'

Mama had jumped up in a rage. 'Claim to be the father?' she shouted. 'The said subject? Gracious Heavens above. . . .' Papa quietened her with a tender movement of his hand, and said to the Professor: 'This, Sir, is the birth certificate, this the excerpt from the baptismal register in Salzburg, and here is my son's travelling

passport.' He laid the documents on the table. 'On all three you will find it quite clearly stated that Wolfgang was born on 7th January 1756.'

Pantaloon smiled knowingly, and did not even glance at the papers. 'I have no manner of doubt, Herr Mozart, that a son was born to you on 7th January 1756, and that he was given the name of Wolfgang. What I do, however, presume to doubt in the highest degree, is that the subject standing here before me is identical with the son born to you on 7th January 1756 in Salzburg. . . !'

He looked triumphantly at Papa, as if he had now captured him beyond all hope of escape, and then granted himself a further pinch of snuff; while Mama whispered in my ear: 'What a brazen, impudent quack this is!'

'No, Sir, no! No!'—the Professor now flew into a passion—'You cannot so easily cheat true science. You must bring far stronger evidence than that to convince me that this person here is a child under age and not, as I suspect, a grown-up marriageable deformed monster, or, to put it plainly—a dwarf!'

Mama was almost beside herself. 'Truly this is too much to bear. I shall slap him'—and it was all I could do to restrain her from carrying this threat into action. 'If such are your suspicions, my dear Sir', I heard Papa saying quite calmly, 'then I can only recommend you to put yourself in touch with any physician of your own choice and have Wolfgang examined by him.'

'Ha—ha—ha', laughed Professor Barrington bitterly, not finding it at all amusing. 'Physicians, examinations! As if everyone didn't know that all that is pure cant, and that these doctors would certify anything required for even the smallest consideration offered them.'

Papa had nothing to say to this, and Mama gazed silently at the ceiling, not trusting herself to speak. But the Professor, after fortifying himself with more snuff, must needs drive home his advantage. 'Oh, no, my esteemed Herr Mozart', he thundered, '*Non credo!* I do not believe in it!'

Silence followed this pronouncement, and then something happened which could scarcely have been foreseen by any of those present. Wolfgang, who till then had followed the proceedings intently though without uttering a sound, now rose and walked towards Papa, took his hand, looked reproachfully into his eyes, and then intoned in a deep unnatural voice: 'Leopold, my son, why do you not tell the

good Professor Barrington the truth? Namely, that I am your father, that my age is five-and-seventy, and that your daughter Nannerl over there is of course my darling grandchild. . . ?'

We were all speechless—except for Pantaloon, who leapt to his feet ecstatically at this vindication of true science. 'I knew it, I knew it!' he shouted to his secretary in triumph. 'Take it down, Ebenezer! Verbatim! Word for word! The witness declares that he is seventy-five years of age! Incredible! A dwarf and a grandfather! I knew it all the time. Well, you cannot cheat science.' He seized his wig, his snuff-box and his stick, and almost ran, followed by a bewildered Ebenezer, out of the room, the house, the garden—out of Chelsea.

Papa rushed after him, calling out: 'Professor Barrington! Professor Barrington! Please listen to me. . . . The boy was only in jest. . . . Professor . . . listen . . .' Then he gave up the struggle, and returned to the room, laughing so much he forgot all about the box on the ear which Wolferl might well have deserved—and expected.

Bourne Place near Canterbury, end of July 1765

TOMORROW we shall be in Dover to cross the English Channel—may it not be as rough as when we came here! Tomorrow, therefore, after a happy and successful stay of sixteen months, we leave England. We have grown very fond of the English people, just as they seem to like us—and all four of us have the strong desire to return here very soon.

Why are we going, then? Well, there are many reasons, and the most important is that the public is no longer quite so enthusiastic about the Mozarts as a form of entertainment. When we arrived, we were a new sensation, people paid high fees to hear us, and we gave a number of public and private concerts. But slowly the invitations became rarer, the concerts were not as packed as they used to be, and sometimes we sat at home for weeks without doing anything, while Papa ran from one end of London to the other, trying to find some new commissions for us.

And then, at the beginning of January, the Royal Court suddenly retired from all its social activities, and the great aristocratic houses

followed its example. The King, so it was whispered, was very very ill. For many days he had to be kept in bed, and he suffered from unspeakable headaches. People even said he had gone mad, and that the Queen would not leave his bedside. But in April he could again be seen going for his morning drives through the Park, though still looking rather ill. At that time the talk was also about grave political complications (which I could make nothing of), about quarrels between the King and his ministers. Then came spring with its duck-shooting, the cock-fights, circus performances and horse-racing. Even the Italian pantomime had to cancel their performances, and nobody seemed much interested in music.

So Papa was delighted when the Dutch Ambassador approached him one day with an invitation for all four of us to go to The Hague as the guests of Her Highness the Princess Caroline von Nassau-Weilburg, and to play at court.

In Bourne Place, near the town of Canterbury, where we are having a short rest and holiday on our way to Dover, we are living on a large estate amidst cows, chickens, flowers and fruit trees. We do much riding, on little wild ponies, over wide meadows; we bathe in the clear, clean little brook which flows in front of the house, and we go for walks in the forests nearby.

For the first time since we left Salzburg two years ago, we are with other children. We laugh and play with them, we climb the trees just as they do, and nobody who saw Wolferl here, with his wild hair and torn breeches, racin round without shoes or stockings, would recognise the young noble in his violet court-coat and white wig who played the piano in the Palaces of Schönbrunn and Versailles.

We had almost forgotten all about concerts and music, pianos and scales—till yesterday on a walk we passed a gipsy camp. In front of a dirty waggon stood an old man with a barrel-organ, on top of which sat two little monkeys, in glaring red tail-coats, with saucy plumed hats on their heads. They danced quite gracefully to the music, turned their somersaults, jumped at the old man's head and shoulder—and in the end they took their hats into their paws and begged for a penny. Everybody around us was laughing, and I think I must have been the only one who remained serious. I thought about the two of us, Wolferl and myself, and all the little tricks we have been trained to perform.

Papa must have guessed my thoughts, for he took my hand

lovingly, and walked on ahead with me while Mama and Wolferl were still watching the monkeys. 'My darling Nannerl looks sad', he began. 'Angry with me, perhaps, because I have not praised and encouraged her for some time, hm? You should not cry, my dear girlie. You will understand me one of these days, I am sure, and you will find out for yourself why all this happens. When we are born, Nannerl, we all receive a sort of mission to carry out from our dear Lord God.'

I made no answer, and Papa went on: 'To me, so unworthy, the Almighty has given a treasure: a child far, very far, above other children. And He commanded me to lead my son and to make him what I myself could never be: a Master! As long as I live, Nannerl, my dearest daughter, I shall not cease trying to fulfil God's mission, if need be against the whole world!'

Then he was silent, and I, plucking up my courage, asked at length: 'Why, Papa? Why Wolfgang, and why not me?'

'My child', he answered, 'you and I have great talent. You play the piano a thousand times better than do thousands of others, and I write my little pieces of music which today the people rather fancy, and which they forget tomorrow. But our Wolfgang is chosen among millions—he is a genius!'

Genius—genius—how often had I heard that word! Papa admits I play the piano better than thousands of others, so why am I not a genius when Wolfgang is one? Because he can guess the names of the notes and can play with his fingers hidden under a napkin? And again Papa answered the thoughts I had left unspoken, but which perhaps I had shown by a sour face.

'Nannerl', he said, 'you know the concerto your brother wrote when he was four?'

'Oh dear, Papa', I replied, 'how many times have you told the story to Mama and me, and to all your friends!'

'Yes, Nannerl', he said, 'and it has become so familiar that you have almost forgotten the point. A child of four might possibly scribble a few notes together, which could be played, but never, without some special gift of nature, a whole long piece following recognised musical laws and rules—which nobody could have begun to teach him at that age. No, Wolfgang has in him an instinct which can bring him to compose like the great masters. That is what I mean by genius, and that is the instinct, the inspiration, which I by training and encouragement can help to foster. But perhaps now you see, my

dearest Nannerl, you who have also your own mission in life to be found and followed. . . .’

He stopped, for Mama and Wolferl had caught up with us. They were still laughing about the two trained monkeys, and they described to Papa all the monkeys’ tricks, while I walked behind, watching them and thinking of what Papa had said. The fuss Monsieur Grimm had made over Wolferl in Paris had not worried me at all, for I could see our patron was vain, wishing to be all the time the centre of general interest; and as he could not achieve this by himself, he used the miraculous young Wolfgang Mozart for the purpose.

Even our experience last week at the newly-opened British Museum in London did not surprise me. There the director proudly led us through all the wonderful, huge, but half-empty halls, with all the statues, pictures, books and old maps; then he asked Wolferl, as a souvenir of our coming, to write a piece of music and dedicate it to the Museum. The next day the boy wrote a four-part hymn, ‘God is our Refuge’; Papa handed the manuscript to the Museum, and now it remains there with all the manuscripts of the ancient kings and poets and philosophers. No, I was not too surprised about that: somehow or other, I thought, the poor director has to fill up all the half-empty drawers and shelves in all the huge halls.

It was none of these things that disturbed me, but the whole of last year I have been unable to get out of my head the words Herr Bach spoke to me beneath the old oak-tree in our garden at Chelsea. ‘The thirst for knowledge of a real genius’, he had said—and then again: ‘The bridge between the old music and the new. . . .’

Tomorrow, then, we leave England and start our journey home. How much longer will it be before we are back again in Salzburg? A month? Six months? A whole year?

I have seen so much of the strange big world—too much perhaps—and I want to go back into my own world, however small it may be. I want to see my three friends again, Ursula and Resi and Sally, and sometimes, even more than of them, I think of good old Kajetan with his very long nose. Oh yes, I do heartily want to see *him* again.

DOMINE *descende!* Our Father in Heaven! Have mercy upon me—my daughter is dying!’ I could hear my dear father’s voice, but it sounded a million miles away, somewhere out there in the universe.

I wanted to stretch out my arms towards him, but it was as if some great weight were hanging on them, and hard as I tried I could not lift them. Nor could I move my eyelids; like heavy curtains they seemed to stand between the world and myself. My head ached horribly, and I could feel streams of sweat pouring down my cheeks. The room felt musty and almost airless.

The events of the last weeks flashed through my brain: the stormy passage across the English Channel (I was sick as a dog for two hours), the meeting with our coach, Matilda (which we had put to store in Calais), the stop at Lille because first Wolferl and then Papa fell ill, the tiring journey to Holland across soft, loamy roads through incessant pouring rain; and then finally the old inn at The Hague. I had fallen into my bed, utterly tired out, and when I awoke next day, I knew it was my turn to be feverish and ill.

Mama put cold compresses on my chest and forehead, but the fever did not subside, and my throat felt parched and screwed up tight. It must have been two or three days later when I saw dimly, as if through a heavy veil, my parents and little brother standing at my bedside. It was evening, Wolferl was crying bitterly and had pressed a handkerchief to his mouth so that his sobs should not be heard. Mama was just behind him and held him firmly, as though she would protect him from some danger. Papa had taken my hand. ‘Nannerl, my Nannerl’, he said, ‘resign yourself now unto the will of God.’

Then something horrible happened: a tall, lean man came into the room. His face was pale, his eyes were small and half closed, he seemed to be leering at me with a malicious gloating grin. It was the priest who had come to give me extreme unction. I shuddered when I received Holy Communion from his dirty, ugly hands. I wanted to cry out ‘No—No—No!’ But my lips were as if glued together, and I could not utter the one wretched syllable.

The priest went, and my father took my hand again, speaking to me of this world’s vanities and the great bliss of death and eternal

life. His voice became softer and softer, and when I managed to open my eyes a little, I saw him standing at the window, just as he had done in Salzburg the day Wolfgang was born, with his hands pressed together behind him, and I heard him praying: '*Domine descende*, Father in Heaven, have mercy upon us. . . .' Then I closed my eyes, and felt as if I were falling—deep, deep into endless nothingness.

When I woke up, it might have been in a different world. The windows were wide open, the warm October sun streamed into the room, and outside a bird was warbling gaily. A plump elderly gentleman bent over me, looking at me kindly through his big spectacles and softly stroking my cheeks. 'Aha, aha!' he said, and his powerful bass voice echoed like thunder through the little room. 'So the young lady has finally consented to open her lovely eyes and look at her Uncle Doctor.' I felt weak, but had to smile because the stranger had such a sweet look on his face, and because I saw my dear father standing behind him, looking marvellously happy.

'This, Nannerl', he said, 'is Dr Schwencke, physician in ordinary to Her Highness the Princess von Weilburg. She sent him to your bedside, and he has performed a miracle; he has saved your life.'

'Stuff and nonsense!' protested the Doctor. 'I have done nothing miraculous. There'—he pointed to the open window—'in the fresh air, the sun, and of course in the young lady's wonderful constitution, there lies the miracle.'

I felt as though I had come out of a bath in a cool stream. My head was clear and had stopped aching—and I realised I was hungry. This thought might have been said aloud, like an entrance cue on the stage, for there already was my mother. Her cheeks glowed with joy, and in her hands she carried a tray on which there was a dish of steaming chicken soup, a plate of mild sweetish ham, and all sorts of preserved fruit. I ate everything, and still I was hungry. Mama brought some gingerbread cake and marchpane—and I kept on eating. Dr Schwencke smiled, Mama and Papa smiled with him, and then they began to laugh. I could see it was rather funny how hungry I seemed to be, and in between mouthfuls I was soon laughing myself.

Suddenly, right in the middle of our laughter, we heard the sound of a piano in the next room. 'It's the boy!' said my father, and ran towards the door. 'He must stop immediately.' 'Oh please, Papa', I called to him just in time, 'please let him. I have not heard any music for such a long time.'

It was a short solemn melody we heard, almost like a prayer, starting softly but growing louder and louder, only to break off abruptly with one blaring chord. Then, as it seemed to me, you could hear the prayer-melody, encompassed by a wild rush of semi-quavers, struggling with a dark theme in a minor key. There was a short pause, after which the prayer sounded again in glorious full chords, rising higher and higher, growing more and more passionate—before fading out in a calm, peaceful ending.

Silently we had all listened to the music: Papa, Mama, Dr Schwencke and I. None of us said a word, for none of us wanted to break the silence. Then, slowly and carefully, the door opened, and Wolferl stood on the doorstep. His head was lowered, but his eyes looked shyly at me. 'Are you well again, little sister of my heart?' he murmured, and instead of answering, I asked him: 'What was it you were just playing, Wolferl?' 'A little piece for the Princess', he muttered bashfully, still looking at the floor, 'because she sent us the kind Doctor, and because he has made you well again.'

Then in the evening, after they had all gone and Mama had changed the sheets and the pillow-cases in my bed, and tucked me in so that I was covered right up to my eyebrows, and I was quite alone in the stillness of the night, I began thinking about my little brother. But differently from the way I had thought about him till then. I no longer asked myself why he was a genius and I was not, why all hearts flew to him and not towards me; I was even ashamed that I had ever had thoughts like that.

No, I thought of him as if, through God's great grace, I recognised in that very hour my own destiny and the mission of which Papa had spoken. If God had ordered my father to lead Wolfgang, and if He had ordered Herr Bach to teach him, then I was chosen to protect him and defend him from all mischief or misfortune that might befall him. And that night I vowed to devote myself to such a mission for as long as I lived.

OF course I cannot keep my diary every day or week, or even month. I feel I can best confide in it the main items out of a long period, or else any specially important happenings, which King George would want me to describe 'as my heart sees them'. And in the last months, by the way, while we have been in Holland, the poor King, we hear, has again been very ill, this time much worse than last year. We have also heard from Vienna that Crown Prince Joseph has become co-Regent with his mother, and therefore Emperor. •

As to ourselves, since the beginning of the year, when I became properly better, we have travelled all over Holland giving concerts, and played many times at court. Princess Caroline likes us; she is the sister of the young Regent of the Netherlands, about thirty, rather short and stout, but always gay. Not too generous as far as money is concerned, Papa says, but she has given us many good introductions, and her reputation has obtained private appearances for us in the houses of the rich merchants in Amsterdam, Rotterdam and Antwerp. And we shall never forget it was she who sent us the kind Dr Schwencke, of whom we have all grown very fond, so that we shall miss him greatly when we leave the country.

This happens next month. Papa has decided not to return straight to Salzburg, but first to make a deviation via Brussels, Paris and Switzerland. He says we shall be back home, though, by Christmas. He is very proud because all his expectations have been fulfilled, and if for the rest of the journey the four of us remain in good health, then it will have been a real and great success.

Wolferl has grown considerably during these last months, and is now nearly as tall as I am. I believe the time he spent in England, and particularly with Herr Bach, has formed him anew. Before that he used to be obstinate and sometimes arrogant, but today, although he is famous and knows he is famous, he remains an obedient and well-behaved boy, his head not turned by all the compliments that are paid him—and as affectionate as ever.

He often runs up to me and asks eagerly: 'Do you really love me, little sister of my heart?'—and looks rather sad if I do not immediately say 'yes' or 'of course I do'. Nor is there an evening when the famous good-night ceremony is not performed, complete with

the made-up canon, the tip of Papa's nose, and the glass case for keeping him in. Often I tell Wolferl fairy tales, and he must have heard the story of Aladdin and his lamp a hundred times without growing tired of it.

The other day he thought of something special. 'I have founded a Kingdom, Nannerl', he told me proudly, 'the Kingdom of Rücken.' 'Why Rücken?' I asked. 'Oh, just the name I have chosen', he said, 'at the back of my mind, I suppose. Anyhow, many thousands of people live there, they are all good and all gay. Anybody who does not smile or sing is at once flung into jail, and anybody who wants money needs only to stretch out his hand, and he finds it in the air. I, of course, am the King of Rücken—and I appoint you first Princess.' Then I had to draw for him a map of his Kingdom with towns and villages and mountains and valleys. He gave them all names, and the capital of his country he called Goodheart.

Salzburg, Christmas 1766

IT is Christmas, and we have really been at home for three whole weeks, though it seems an age already. Three and a half years we were travelling around, and how often during those years did I think of Salzburg! Of the lovely house in Drehgasse, of Löchel Square in front of it with the wonderful old fountain, of the Salzburg housewives standing there and washing their laundry, of the great bridge over the river Salzach, of the mighty Residence of our Archbishop . . . and then when I saw it all again, everything seemed different from what I had imagined: different, and smaller, much smaller.

The house in Drehgasse had become lower, Löchel Square was so tiny that with hands outstretched you could nearly reach the fronts of the houses on both sides, the housewives around the fountain were merely gossiping maliciously about their neighbours, the bridge over the Salzach seemed almost like a toy when I thought of London Bridge, and looking at the Archbishop's Residence—I could not even think of Versailles.

Like the places, the people too have suddenly become much

smaller. Archbishop Sigismund, whom I had always imagined a magnificent powerful Prince, now appeared like one of the hundred court officials at St James' Palace. The Court Orchestra, of which every Salzburger is so terribly proud, sounded like a village band when I thought of the orchestras in Paris or Amsterdam. The Court Organist, Herr Adlgasser, was nothing but a pompous ass when I remembered Christian Bach, and even the affected Monsieur Grimm seemed all at once important when I stood in the presence of our local poet (and trumpeter) Herr Schachtner.

Ursula, my best friend, has also changed greatly from what she used to be, or at least from what I had imagined her. It took a whole week before I could tolerate the trivial chatter she talks all day long, and even now I often have to pull myself together so as not to be rude to her.

Mama insisted that I should go to dancing lessons, like all the other girls of my age, and to please her, I agreed. So now I sit every Thursday in the apartment of the dancing master, Herr Cyrilus Deibel, on one of the chairs which stand along the walls, and wait till one of the gallant Salzburger youths comes and asks me to dance with him.

For the sake of appearances I have to pretend I am delighted when young Messieurs Haffner or Molk, Amann or Barisani, deign to ask me, though I am in truth much bored, disgusted by their sweating hands and common smell, and annoyed when they step on my feet, which of course happens every second bar. But Cyrilus knows no mercy. He claps his hands three times, puts his little pochette-violin under his chin, and we have to begin the Courante or the Allemande or the Sarabande—all old-fashioned dances which nobody wants to learn these days.

I am afraid the boys and girls in Herr Deibel's classes are as little delighted with me as I with them, and that they consider me a silly little goose, conceited and arrogant. Yet I am really trying hard to be one of them, to share their joys and troubles, to be interested in the same things they are interested in, and to laugh at their jokes.

But sometimes I know that I do not succeed, for I catch myself thinking of the clear blue eyes of the Crown Prince—or I should rather say the Emperor Joseph; of the golden clavecin on which we played before Madame Pompadour; of the rotting corpses on the gallows at Tyburn and the leprous beggars on the floors of the Paris

churches. And although I do not feel better than the others, I do feel hundreds of years older than all Cyrilus Deibel's pupils.

The only one who is different is Kajetan. I wander round with him, up to the Mönchsberg through high snow, and I talk to him about our journeys, and suddenly his nose does not seem at all large and his eyes not at all sad. When I talk to him, I forget his ugliness, and perhaps he understands, like nobody else, how to listen—and say nothing.

His father, Uncle Hagenauer, is mightily glad that we are home again, and as a homecoming present he gave us a sweet little fox-terrier puppy, just three days old—which we decided to call Bimperl or Bimpy. But Bimpy is not our only acquisition, for while we were away Auntie Hagenauer got us a maid from nearby Klein-Gnaim, who is not much older than I am and has a good-natured face and purplish-red cheeks. Her name is Teresa; her hair falls almost to the floor and is tied in two large pigtales. She is so shy she looks down at the ground all the time and blushes if anybody talks to her. But I believe she is a good soul, and a great help to Mama. (And certainly we can afford a maid, for Papa—as he told us himself—after paying all his debts and the travelling expenses, has returned to Salzburg with seven thousand guilders in his pocket!)

Every Salzburger now looks upon Wolferl with awe and respect. People tell one another the silliest stories about him: that the King of England asked Wolferl to call him George; that my brother, in spite of his eleven years, is already a millionaire—and other such stuff. Then there was a long article in the *Europäische Zeitung* about 'this astonishing child with the outstanding gifts God has bestowed on him in such magnificent measure, and the brilliant way his father has developed them—a true wonder, not only of our own times, nay, of former times as well. . .'. And much more in the same strain.

Fortunately Papa does not take such scribblings seriously, and Wolferl has to go to school every day like any ordinary boy, and do his homework of an evening, whether it be in English, French, Italian—he has picked up a fair smattering of all these languages during our travels—or arithmetic, at which he is a very keen pupil, or counterpoint. Only then, when he has finished his homework, is he allowed to go to the piano, to practise and write music.

He likes this hard work, he is obedient and patient, he loves our

parents as much as I do. Really it is surprising he is so well-behaved but there are times when he forgets himself, and it causes me much amusement to hear the impudent small boy bringing out something unexpected and perhaps shocking to grown-ups.

Like last Sunday, for instance, when we all came out of the cathedral after High Mass, and people stood around him asking a hundred silly questions, all wanting to hear something particularly clever from the newest Salzburg celebrity. Finally Herr Haffner, our worthy Mayor, came up to Wolferl and remarked with a rather condescending nod: 'Well, well, so we were on a long journey, and made our native town truly proud—did we not?'

Wolferl looked him saucily up and down: 'What do you mean, Herr Haffner? We, you say—you too? I can't remember having seen you anywhere else but here in Salzburg!' Everyone round us began to laugh, and I was much relieved to see the Mayor laughing more than anyone else.

While we were away, the Archi-Episcopal orchestra got a new leader, although Papa still keeps his post, and has the same salary as before. He is really equal to the new man, but all the same he was very angry about it—yet what else could the Archbishop do but look for a substitute when his own leader travels round the world for over three years?

Yesterday, on the afternoon of Christmas Day, there was a knock on the door, and in walked the new leader, paying his formal call—Herr Michael Haydn. Papa and Mama, though polite, were somewhat cool and reserved towards him, but Wolferl and I liked him immediately. He must be about thirty, and looks rather like a peasant, tall and healthy, with twinkling eyes and a shiny reddish nose. Also you have to laugh the moment he opens his mouth, for he is very outspoken and always seems to say exactly what he thinks.

Thus when Papa bade him take a seat, and Mama offered him a cup of coffee and some Christmas cake, he exclaimed in disgust: 'Coffee, Frau Mozart, coffee? Haven't you got a decent glass of wine?'

To bridge the rather embarrassing pause, Papa enquired about the famous Herr Joseph Haydn, our visitor's brother. 'I suppose he is well enough', replied Michael Haydn, 'but what can you expect of somebody who is married to such a bitch?'

Mama was shocked, and I caught her making signs to him with her eyes to remember that children were present; and again Papa helped cover the embarrassment. 'On my journeys I had of course a good opportunity of studying all the great European orchestras, and I assure you, esteemed Herr Haydn, that I have never before heard such perfect orchestral playing as from the famous Mannheim Hofkapelle. What obedience, what harmony, what artistic seriousness—superb! And at the same time so frily German, so utterly un-Italian!'

'Ah, I like that, Herr Mozart', replied Michael Haydn. 'I too hate these Italian asses.'

Papa coughed uneasily: 'This is certainly not the right place to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of German and Italian music. What I meant was that in contrast to our Salzburg musicians, who are rather a rough, ill-mannered lot, most of them drunkards and therefore generally despised, our colleagues from Mannheim possess a deal of intelligence and breeding, and are therefore well liked by their fellow-citizens.'

Michael Haydn had listened in silence. He now lit his pipe with great fuss, puffed the smoke into the middle of the room, and then said: 'You know, Mozart, I believe the main thing is that they know how to fiddle and to blow, whether they are sober or drunk!' He then invited Papa to come to the table in one of the Salzburg wine-cellar where he and Lipp, the second organist, and Spitzeder, the tenor, are accustomed to meet every night. 'Do come and booze with us, my dear Mozart!'

At this Mama jumped up from her chair in horror. 'Herr Haydn, you will do well to remember in future that the Archi-Episcopal Vize-Kapellmeister Mozart does not—go and booze, as you call it.'

Haydn puffed a mighty cloud of smoke in the direction where Mama was sitting, and then said very quietly: 'Don't be a damned kill-joy, Mozartin!'

After he had gone, Mama strictly forbade us to see the new Konzertmeister again; we were told to take no notice of him whatever and to go to the other side of the road should we see him approaching. 'But Mama', said Wolferl, 'he is so terribly funny, and he smells so beautiful, much more beautiful than the fine ladies in Versailles with all their perfumes!'

'Did you or didn't you hear what I said, you dreadful child?'

thundered Mama. 'I do not wish you to have anything more to do with him—and that's my last word!' Wolferl was silent for a few seconds, and then said quietly, just like Michael Haydn: 'Don't be a damned kill-joy, Mozartin!'

I think it was the first time in his life he got a sound box on the ear from Mama.

Vienna, October 1768

THE great smallpox death is raging through the world, and for many months now it has been destroying thousands: princes and beggars, children and old people, villages and entire cities. Nobody knows where it comes from, and nobody can guess where it will strike tomorrow. Everybody tries to explain the causes: is it the overcrowded dirty slums where people live like wild beasts, is it vermin—or is it a kind of punishment for the sins of the world? Nobody knows the answer, and only very few remain alive after the horrible red and black spots have come upon them.

Praise be to God, our Wolferl was one of those few! We came to Vienna last year, in September. The Archduchess Maria Josepha, a daughter of the Empress, was going to marry the King of Naples, and the wedding was to be celebrated with great pomp. Papa hoped to get Wolferl the commission to write the wedding opera—but our journey was an unlucky one right from the start. There was no wedding, for both bride and bridegroom had died of smallpox, and soon afterwards not only our Empress herself but a great many Viennese caught the dreaded disease.

We escaped from Vienna, first to Brünn and from there to Olmütz. A doctor advised us to have the smallpox inoculated from a person who has had them—in order to avoid them or to make them less dangerous when they came. We had already been told in Paris about this new madness that was in fashion, and through which many perfectly healthy people fell victims; it was even said that our Empress was inoculated and had thus been saved. But the mere thought shocked Mama so much she refused point blank, and Papa too said one must leave everything to the mercy of God.

I am afraid it was also much too late, and Wolferl must have had

the germ of the disease in him for some time. He developed a high fever, his pulse began to race, and his back was hurting him terribly. Then he kept being sick, and bringing up blood, so much and for such a long time that we were afraid he would die of that. And then suddenly they arrived, the horrible black and red spots: first one on his chest, then another on the cheek, the neck, the foot—everywhere, everywhere: within four hours the little body was covered with the pustules.

I stood at the door, far from his bed, and looked at my brother; but I could not recognise him any more, so much had the disease changed and wasted his features. The eyelids seemed to have grown together with the skin of his face—he was blind! He writhed and flung himself around in his little bed as though he were in a last convulsion, yelling and shouting in delirium; and finally he fell into a deep unnatural coma, lying stiff as a corpse.

That was the worst time for my poor little Wolferl and for all of us. In turns we kept watch at his bedside, and when I saw him lying there, disfigured, swollen, blind and helpless, I could not imagine the gay, laughing, handsome boy he had been a few days before.

Then suddenly the pustules began to fester, and soon afterwards the swelling receded, the spots vanished, falling off one by one. The worst seemed over, and one morning (we were all still asleep, for watching was no longer necessary) I heard his voice: 'A mirror, Nannerl, please get me a mirror!'

His eyelids had opened, and he could see again. For quite a long time he looked into the mirror, contemplating his face. 'Have you seen my nose, darling little sister of my heart?' he asked me; then: 'It's thick and red, isn't it?—just like Michael Haydn's nose!' And for the first time I saw him smile again.

When we returned to Vienna, many things had changed there. The Empress had ceased to entertain, and music was banished from her court. The death of her child had altered her mode of life. She never smiled now, and people whispered to one another that for days on end she would sit in the vault of the Capuchin monks amidst the coffins of her Habsburg forefathers. There in silence, without any tears in her eyes, she would gaze at the empty space where one day her own coffin would rest. . . .

The Palace of Schönbrunn has become a cold and over-quiet

house. A sad and stubborn old woman walks in silence through the huge halls where we children once played, past the Hussars and Pandurs—whose salutes she no longer even acknowledges. She demands utter obedience and submission from everybody, above all from her own son, the Emperor Joseph.

I saw him again after six years, and hardly recognised him. Though he cannot be thirty yet, his face was yellowish, his nose too large for the rest of the face, his lips thin and grey, his hands disfigured by many greenish veins. He was still tall, but pitifully thin, and only his wonderful clear blue eyes revealed him as still a young man. He has certainly passed through a time of very great sorrow, for first his young wife died of smallpox, and two months later his mother and her ministers forced him to marry the ugly Princess Josepha of Bavaria. They say he has become very prim and puritan, avoiding all company, living only for his six-year-old daughter, the Archduchess Mimi.

I had applied for an audience to ask the Emperor's patronage for my brother. Papa had not yet given up his plan that Wolfgang should write an opera, and he hoped the Emperor would help us launch a performance at the Imperial Burgtheater. But though he seemed pleased to see me, the moment I began to talk about Wolfgang, the Emperor became very reserved. 'Your brother, Mademoiselle', he said, 'I well remember his funny little tricks. How old might he be now?'

'Twelve, your Majesty.'

'Twelve, Mademoiselle! And you or your father mean to tell me that a boy of twelve can write an opera?'

'A comic opera, your Majesty—*La Finta Semplice* it is to be called, and it is not meant to be more than a harmless comedy of mistaken identities. Just a friendly occasion to listen to a few of Wolfgang's youthful compositions: arias, duets, dances, love-songs. . . .'

The Emperor got into a rage: 'Love-songs, Mademoiselle, love-songs! What does this child know about love?' And he began pacing round the room with long excited strides. 'What has he experienced? Has Fate robbed him of a beloved angel, has it chained him to a she-devil? How dare this boy try to sing of love?'

I stood there in the middle of the room, embarrassed and silent. The Emperor must have seen my distress, for he stopped his pacing, and stood for a moment looking at me. 'I am sorry, Nannerl', he said

then, in an entirely different tone, quiet and friendly once more. 'I am worn out, agitated . . . please try to forget you have seen me like this. I will give you a letter to Signor Giuseppe Affligio, licensee of my Burghtheater—he will help your brother.'

'Thank you, your Majesty', I breathed, and would have taken my leave with a curtsy, had not the Emperor seized my hand and made me sit down. 'Stay, Nannerl, please stay and talk to me! I am alone, alone as no man ever was before me.'

I did not know why he was saying this to me, and I did not know what to reply, but already he had begun to talk, pouring out his heart to me. First about the political difficulties with Bavaria, then of his love for Isabella, of her horrible death, and of the Empress' devilish plan to marry him quickly to the crooked and crippled Josepha—simply to pacify the Bavarians. He had never touched her, never entered her bed-chamber; 'despised and shunned, an uninvited guest, that is how she now lives in the Imperial Palace'. Joseph dropped his voice, and brought his chair nearer to mine. 'Nannerl!' he whispered, and his face was white as chalk. 'With my soul, with all my thoughts, I am waiting for her death . . .'

The poor, poor Emperor!

Wolferl wrote the *Finta Semplice*, but Signor Affligio refused to accept it. Papa suspects intrigues from the singers and other composers, and he even submitted a complaint against Affligio to the Emperor. In vain, all in vain—though with a single stroke of his pen the Emperor could have ordered Affligio to perform the opera at once. Perhaps he does not believe in Wolfgang, perhaps he does not like him. Sometimes I even wonder whether he remembers the untuned E-string and still bears Wolfgang a grudge for his impertinence—but no, he could not possibly be so petty.

We were disheartened by all that had happened during these last months, and Mama wanted to pack the trunks for our journey home, when one day a friendly and very well-dressed, middle-aged gentleman burst into our house—Dr Mesmer, a physician and lover of music, who is known to everyone in Vienna. A year ago he married the daughter of a wealthy apothecary from the Landstrasse district, and has since given up his surgery. He built himself a laboratory and there, it is said, he experiments on guinea-pigs and rats. Nobody knows much about these experiments, but everyone talks of them

and considers Mesmer a man of miracles. He leads a great social life, and his guests are accustomed to hearing the very latest music in his house.

He had of course heard the sad story of Wolfgang's *Finta Semplice*, and 'Oh, those Viennese', he exclaimed, shaking his head fiercely, 'those damned Viennese! They don't want to see anything worth while or good or new.'

He said this almost as soon as he came into the room, and Papa agreed with him, delighted to find a sympathiser. 'Yes, Dr Mesmer', he said, 'if it comes to farces or Punch-and-Judy shows, to ghosts and demons and coarse jokes and obscenities, then they applaud till they are almost out of breath. But if somebody offers them intelligent drama, they cough and talk through it and won't even listen. But in the case of Wolfgang's *Finta Semplice*, we have not only utter misunderstanding but something much more despicable: malice, calumny and the worst type of envy.'

'True enough, my dear Herr Kapellmeister', concurred Mesmer, 'although I do not believe—and please bear this in mind—I do not believe that the experience is profitless for the young man. On the contrary, your son has but received a small foretaste of all the sorrows and tribulations which may be in store for him. And if he is as reasonable as he is musical, then in spite of his youth he will be fortified against many things.'

'Thus we must fight and struggle in this world', sighed my father. 'If somebody has no talent he is unlucky enough, but scarcely more unlucky than whoever has talent, for such a one creates for himself a host of malicious, envying adversaries.'

'Again I agree', said the Doctor, 'and for a time they will even dare to laugh at their wretched victory. But we two, Herr Kapellmeister, you and I must not be intimidated by such practices. We must never weary of the struggle and never surrender.'

Papa looked very pleased, and smiled with great friendliness. 'You are right, revered Dr Mesmer', he said, 'every word you say is true.' After a short pause he continued delicately: 'May I assume, however, that your kindly wish to recognise the parallel struggle we are waging in our different fields, grateful though my son and I are for such recognition, is hardly the sole reason, Sir, for your extremely welcome visit?'

'Indeed no, Herr Kapellmeister', declared Dr Mesmer, returning

Papa's smile. 'I have in fact come to your house to rectify part of the injustice done to your son. Listen: I am in the very happy position of possessing a lovely garden, which contains many arbours, prospects, statues and benches—even a small theatre with a little stage. How would it be'—here he turned towards my brother—'if young Wolfgang Mozart wrote a little operetta for this theatre, and of course for the delight of my guests?'

Wolferl greeted the suggestion with enthusiasm, especially when the good Doctor even put forward a subject for the *divertissement*: the old story of Bastien and Bastienne, a peasant couple, young, very much in love, driven apart by mutual jealousy, and finally reunited by an old village soothsayer.

My brother threw himself into the work with great fervour and finished the little score in only a few days. Last Sunday the piece was performed before the Mesmers and their guests, mostly good middle-class citizens but among them also one or two aristocrats. At the piano in front of the tiny stage sat Wolfgang, surrounded by his musicians, and he conducted the performance with great zest. There was much laughter and applause, and Papa received a generous fee from Dr Mesmer, so that in the end the many months we were away from Salzburg were not entirely wasted.

But there is something I must confess, at least to my diary—although I am not at all ashamed of having done it. Without having asked Papa or Mama, I had invited the Emperor to the performance in Dr Mesmer's garden. I wrote and informed him that the Doctor had come to our house and given Wolfgang the commission; I begged him to take two hours from his work to listen to my brother's operetta. Secretly I had gone to the Imperial Palace, and handed my letter to a secretary.

Alas, the Emperor did not appear at the performance, nor have I received any answer to my letter.

IN spite of everything the *Finta Semplice* has been performed. Not in Vienna, to be sure, and not for the Emperor, but in Salzburg, for the Archbishop (on his birthday). Not at the glamorous Burgtheater, but in the intimate surroundings of our Residence. And not by Signor Affligio's renowned *ensemble*, but by the members of our own court orchestra and soloists.

Wolferl of course was again at the piano (he would not let anyone else do that) and conducted everything most charmingly. Michael Haydn sat at the leader's desk at rehearsals, and helped Wolferl wherever he could. So interested and useful was he that Papa even overlooked the jug of wine which was continuously under his chair, and from which every now and then he helped himself to a hearty sip—'to fortify himself', as he called it.

Young Frau Haydn sang the leading female part. She is the daughter of Michael's crony, Lipp, who is the assistant organist to Herr Adlgasser. As a child she had a most wonderful voice, and the Archbishop sent her to Italy to study singing there. Then she returned, married Haydn, and everyone in Salzburg knows that the two are living together none too happily. She is vain, coquettish, and has an unfortunate passion for clothes. All the time she reproaches her husband, saying that she sacrificed her career in order to marry him—though today her voice is far from what it used to be. Michael, with his phlegmatic temperament, takes little enough notice, but comforts himself even more with his wine.

Another of his cronies, Herr Anton Spitzeder, sang the tenor part, and drank all through the rehearsals, explaining that it was 'to oil the voice'! Herr Schachtner not only blew the trumpet in the orchestra, but also wrote the words for the '*licenza*', a peroration which was addressed to the Archbishop at the end of the opera.

Yes, it was a truly Salzburgian occasion, without much pomp, but in the best taste, gay and put together with feeling and talent. Our good Prince Sigismund was highly delighted; he thanked everybody and handed Wolferl a purse with a hundred guilders inside.

On the way home I walked in front of the others with Kajetan, and he told me in glowing words how much in my brother's music one could hear and recognise all the new and great experiences Wolferl had had in the world, and what fine progress he had made.

We had just reached Drëhgasse when Auntie Hagenauer said: 'What a wonderful spring night, is it not? Tell me, dear Kajetan, wouldn't you like to take Nannerl for a little promenade along the river?'

I could feel myself blushing, especially when Uncle Hagenauer gaily pinched Papa's arm, and they began laughing a little, and Mama called after us: 'But don't be too long, children.'

Then we were alone. We walked silently across Löchel Square and turned left towards the banks of the Sälzach. The chestnut trees were in bloom, white and red. The sky was full of stars, it was a cool clear night, and the moon hung like a huge golden ducat over the Mönchsberg.

'That was rather obvious, Nannerl, wasn't it?' said Kajetan after we had walked for a while.

I pretended not to have understood. '*That*, Kajetan?' I asked. 'What . . . do you mean?'

'Well—my mother . . . you know', he stammered. 'And yours too—the way they leave us alone. . . .'

'Don't you like it, Kajetan?' I replied.

He became very serious. 'Like it, Nannerl? I have waited for this moment—waited all the years—all the time you have been away. And then—I was always afraid, afraid that the moment would come. . . .'

I tried to help him: 'The moment. . . ?'

'Yes, Nannerl, the moment when I might tell you what you mean to me. No, my dearest, please don't say anything now, let me say what I must. I have had a talk with your father—don't be frightened—not about us. I asked him for his honest opinion, whether I had enough talent to become a professional musician. This is what he told me: "After my wife and children the Hagenauer family are the people I love best in the world, and I want to be plain with you, Kajetan, just as you ask me to be. You know there is nobody I would less wish to hurt than you, Kajetan . . . but . . . you see. . . ." He did not need to say any more. There are three worlds which make my life: God, music, and my love for you, Nannerl. One of them has now collapsed. It has in no way destroyed my adoration for this wonderful art, but my musical ambitions and all my ardour are gone. There remain God—and you. . . .'

I found I was shivering with cold. We had walked quite a long way up the river, and I felt it was time to start back for home. Since

we had returned from Vienna, I too had had the impression that not only Mama and Auntie Hagenauer, but our fathers also, were trying to—make a match between Kajetan and me. My mother reminded me twice a week that I would soon be eighteen, and that Kajetan would one day inherit his father's banking business, and the house in Drehgasse of course, and the villa in Fuschl near the lake, two large houses in Maxglan, vineyards, orchards—everything. And Uncle Hagenauer would ask me with a knowing smile whether I had been learning to cook properly. . . .

I have pretended not to notice what they were talking about. Is this ungrateful of me? Am I foolish that I cannot forget the sad young Emperor, as he sat next to me and opened his heart to me? Often I catch myself with a crazy sinful thought: if he were free from his unloved wife, if he wanted me, yes, I would gladly give him everything. And I would become a true mother to his little Mimi. . . .

Kajetan had been walking silently beside me. Perhaps he guessed my thoughts. 'You have seen a lot of this world, Nannerl', he said, 'more than all the Hagenauers together. You have met famous and important people, and your standards are different from ours. I do not want you to say Yes or No at this moment, but please think over whether you would be willing to live your life with me. Consider it and whatever your decision is, I shall be grateful to you. I would like you to know, Nannerl, that I shall always be here for you—whenever you need me.'

We had arrived back at our house. Kajetan opened the heavy door, and led me up to the third floor. There he took my hand, said softly, 'God be with you, Nannerl', and went down to his parents' apartment.

I lay wide awake in my bed and thought about all he had said. I saw the Emperor in front of me—and the mad wicked thoughts came back again. Through the open window the cool salty May air floated into my room, and I knew then and there that I should never be Kajetan's wife.

JOSEPHA of Bavaria, the Emperor's crippled and spurned wife, is dead! The doctors say she died of smallpox, but was it really this disease that finished her poor unhappy life, or was it the passionate wish of her husband, a thousand times repeated? Was it perhaps my own sinful yearning?

The Emperor has left Vienna, and is reported to be in Italy quite alone without any *entourage*, travelling restlessly from town to town. I feel I know what he is thinking of day and night; I believe I can hear the dreadful reproaches with which he tortures his conscience—and I know that even if there had ever been a small chance, now he is lost to me, finally and for ever. I must try to forget him—if only I could.

The chestnut trees along the banks of the Salzach are losing their leaves, and instead of a beautiful clear blue the river is grey and dirty. White clouds hang low over our little town, and a monotonous fine rain has been drizzling down on us for weeks as if it would never stop.

It was a long time after that night on the banks of the Salzach before Kajetan and I exchanged more than a 'How are you?' or 'Good-night, Kajetan', when we met on the stairs; if ever by chance we found ourselves standing together alone for a minute or two, we did not know what to say to each other, and so walked away in different directions.

Then at length I felt I should not let him remain without a definite answer to his question; it was not fair to leave him still hoping against hope. So one day we walked the old familiar streets again together, and I told him how I felt. He listened silently, and I knew that he understood.

'So this is the second of my worlds which now collapses!' He did not complain when he said this; he was just boundlessly sad. 'First the music, Nannerl—and now you!' I tried to say something, but he forestalled me:

'I know exactly what you would like to say, my dearest. That I have not lost the music, and that we two will be friends for ever. I know, Nannerl—but with music it is exactly as with a woman: one belongs to her, to her alone, or she belongs to the others! And that's how it is with everything in this world, with everything but God. He belongs

to you, you alone, although He belongs to everybody else—to all the world. How very lucky I am, Nannerl, to be one of those chosen ones who carry God in their hearts. . .

Last Sunday Kajetan received his first ordination and joined the monks at the chapter of St Peter's, preparing to become a priest. Along with all his dreams, his ambitions and his earthly goods, he has now renounced his name, and henceforth he wishes to be known as Father Dominicus.

For this solemn occasion Wolfgang composed a Holy Mass, and when it was performed during the Consecration at the Church of St Peter's we all cried—Wolferl most of all, because they were very good friends, he and Kajetan, despite their difference in age. Kajetan has always admired the boy, and when Wolferl wanted to play the organ in church, Kajetan used to tread the bellows for him. They would go fishing together, and Kajetan would catch the flies and worms they needed for bait. But all that aside, I believe that Kajetan taught my brother to admire nature and to love mankind. Yes, he was Wolferl's master, and at the same time his servant, and the boy is losing everything one can possibly lose in a true and loyal friend.

And I—perhaps I have lost more than that. Of course my parents and the Hagenauers know, or have guessed, what part I had in making Kajetan renounce the world, but none of them has reproached me or said anything to me on this score, for which I am deeply grateful. It is true I could never love Kajetan as he loved me, but now he is going from the midst of us, I realise how much he has come to mean in my life, how much I am likely to miss him.

Wolfgang has been long enough in Salzburg, and away from the great world of music outside; that is what Papa has been feeling for some time now. He knows the boy is entirely unknown in Italy, for instance, and that a musician means something to the world only if he has conquered the proud *Patria della Musica*. So the great planning and scheming started once more in our house: Papa wrote his letters, and of course applied for leave of absence.

The Archbishop smiled understandingly when he saw Papa among the applicants for an audience with him. 'Are you wanting to go on a journey once more, Herr Vize-Kapellmeister?'

'With the permission of Your Highness—yes, I am, Sire.'

'Well, and to whom do you want to show off your Wolfgang this time?'

'To the Italians, Your Highness. I have invitations all over the country, from Verona right down to Naples.'

'And has our Wolferl so much advanced that he may compete with all the great Italian *maestri* without disgracing us?'

'My son will do his very utmost to show himself worthy of the confidence Your Highness has placed in him.'

'In that case, dear Mozart, you may go with my blessing, and stay away as long as you wish.' Papa made a deep bow. 'Your salary', the Archbishop continued, 'will be paid to you until the end of March. Should you not be back by that time in Salzburg—then you may still remain in my service, but you shall not get a single kreutzer out of my pocket till you return!' Then, with a gracious smile, he gave Papa his hand to be kissed.

I would have liked to go to Italy too, to see all the beautiful and famous cities, to play the piano once more, to hear the applause . . . but it may not be. Papa was embarrassed when I asked him, and talked about all the troubles a great journey like this brings with it, the expenses and the risks. So I resigned myself to my lot, and could feel how relieved he was when I left the room—realising, as I left it, that my musical career was definitely finished.

At twelve I was a prodigy at the piano, at fifteen I was called the best player in Europe. Today I am eighteen, and one of many hundreds. I am not sad about it, and not angry. On the contrary, I am glad, and somehow even relieved. I am happy that from now on Papa can devote all his strength to Wolfgang; and together with Mama, who also wanted to go to Italy but would not dare say a word of it to Papa, I pray the journey may bring the fulfilment of all our hopes.

IT is five months already since Papa and Wolferl left for Italy. The winter was bitterly cold, and seemed never-ending; life in Salzburg was more monotonous than ever. Frau Haydn had a baby girl, the Archbishop was ill—and one Sunday there was quite a sensation because Herr Adlgasser conducted Holy Mass in the new fashion—with a baton!

I am living quietly and peacefully with Mama, Teresa and little Bimpy, now a full-grown dog—and we wait for Papa's letters from one mail-day to the next. He writes regularly, and at the bottom of the letters there are usually a few lines of nonsense from Wolferl, who seems in good spirits. Papa tells us in detail of their experiences, even though we sometimes feel he may be concealing any setbacks or other things he would not wish us to know.

Anyhow, it seems they have journeyed via the Tyrol, Mantua, Verona, to Milan, and have everywhere been received with great pomp, the aristocracy arranging concerts in Wolfgang's honour wherever they stayed. Huge crowds assemble to stare at and admire him, and the newspapers write many flattering things about him. He has been painted sitting at the piano in his court coat; and the poet Zaccaria Betti has even composed a sonnet in his honour.

'Believe me, Signora Mozart, the whole of Italy will soon be at his feet!' said Signor Steffano Uslenghi, the Papal Courier, enthusiastically, when he received Anna and me in a private room of the Archbishop's Residence. As he had been requested by Papa, he stopped at Salzburg yesterday, on his way from Rome to Vienna, in order to give us all the news. He is an elderly man of great distinction, not at all stiff, but on the contrary very cordial, unaffected and friendly—so that Mama and I both took to him immediately.

Papa, it seems, had gone to his house at Rome with a letter of introduction from a friend of ours, the prebendary Count Zeyll, and was received with great hospitality. Wolfgang played the piano, and soon he had won the motherly heart of the lady of the house, Signora Uslenghi. She would not let the two of them go, and insisted on Papa and Wolferl living in the Uslenghis' suite as long as they stayed in Rome.

'And a greater joy the Herr Kapellmeister could not afford to my wife', said the Papal Courier while pouring each of us a small glass

of yellowy brown Italian wine—very sweet it tasted—and offering us little biscuits flavoured with cheese. ‘How very proud you must be, ladies’, he continued, ‘to call a genius like Amadeus son or brother!’

‘Amadeus?’ exclaimed Mama and I simultaneously in bewilderment.

Signor Uslenghi smiled, ‘Ah, so you have not heard that the *maestrino* has had a second Christian name added to the Wolfgang, which in Italy sounds—shall we say *un poco tedesco*?—rather Germanic. The Herr Kapellmeister had the happy idea of changing Wolfgang Gottlieb into Wolfgang Amadeus. *Capisce?*’

We understood. Mama shook her head, still looking a little puzzled, but I found the new name elegant and melodious. We did not need to ask Signor Uslenghi many questions, for he talked very freely, and of his own accord told us almost everything we could wish to know.

Yes, the boy is in good health, though sometimes rather tired. He is well liked wherever he appears, and he knows people cannot resist his charming smile. At times he is troubled by short-sightedness, and an oculist they consulted suggested he should wear spectacles—but to this Wolfgang as well as Papa would by no means agree (and they say it is we women who are vain!).

In Milan, Signor Uslenghi told us, Wolfgang received a commission from the director of the Opera House (a very famous institution) to write an *opera seria* for the coming season, for a fee of one hundred ducats. The signed contracts have already been exchanged, and work on the libretto—the story of the cruel King Mithridates of Pontus—has begun.

After a concert at the Palace of Count Pallavicini in Bologna, the great Father Martini came to Wolfgang to congratulate him on his success. I have heard much about this man, whose name is mentioned everywhere almost with awe. He is a Franciscan monk, nearly seventy years old, and is considered not only the most brilliant contrapuntist of our time, but also the highest authority on all musical questions. He is reported to have a library of twenty thousand volumes, valuable manuscripts of the great masters, scores, learned papers and treatises. For many years he has been working on his *Storia della Musica*, and the Holy Father himself has granted a *permesso speciale* so that Father Martini may use the library in every Italian church and monastery for his great work.

But it is not only his writings; many hundreds of disciples are spreading Father Martini's fame all over Europe—and one of them is our dear friend Christian Bach. He has often written to the Father about Wolfgang, and although it is very rare for the great man to leave the monk's cell in which he spends his life, yet he went that evening to Count Pallavicini's residence, to hear my brother play. 'I don't want to exaggerate, ladies', declared Signor Uslenghi when he was telling us about this concert, 'but Giambattista Martini, the poor frugal monk, might one day become more important for Wolfgang Amadeus' future than all the crowned heads he has met in the past.'

Mama glanced at me with an uncertain smile on her face, and our host caught her look. 'I see you smile, Signora', he said. 'You don't believe me. Yet your husband agrees with me. He saw how delighted that holy man was with your son's talent though he had spent only a few hours with him, and he saw too what an inextinguishable impression the great teacher's personality made on your son. Herr Mozart intends, therefore, to return to Bologna in the not too distant future, perhaps even this summer, so that Wolfgang Amadeus may study there with Father Martini. . . .'

We heard also from the agreeably talkative Papal Courier one of the happenings about which, if we were right in our suspicion, Papa had expressly not written to us. Indeed Signor Uslenghi told us the tale with some smirking and some parts only hinted at. In places Mama even tried with discreet questions to draw him away on to other topics, but he would not abandon his tale, and I think I have grasped the gist of it, which is of course no discredit to Papa but a little awkward for him to speak of to his wife and daughter.

Well, it seems that Papa tried very hard to make the acquaintance of the great singer Farinelli, most famous of all the *castrati* of our time, now an extremely rich old man of sixty-five who lives in luxurious retirement at his castle near Bologna.

How he acquired all his wealth is very well known. On a concert tour through Spain which he undertook as a young man, the Spanish Queen invited him to sing at court. Her consort, King Philip V, had been for many months estranged from her, and suffered from attacks of melancholia: for days he sat alone in a darkened room, weeping silently and refusing to see a Doctor. The Queen, knowing that music alone might improve the sick man's state, asked Farinelli to cheer and comfort the King with his art.

The *castrato* came, and sang four of his loveliest arias, which the King enjoyed so much he asked the singer to come again, then again—and again. Very slowly his health began to improve, he fell under the spell of the music, found his way back to his wife, and once more took an interest in ruling his country. The power of music had transformed a melancholy half-mad recluse into a new and joyful man—and a beloved King.

Farinelli received a reward surpassing all his expectations: on condition that he stayed in Spain, never again sang in public, but sang every night before the King the same four arias which had achieved the miraculous recovery, he received a yearly pension of fifty thousand francs, the rank of a Minister of the Crown, and free living in the Royal Palace.

After twenty-three years of service at the court, Farinelli returned to Italy, where he built himself a castle near Bologna amidst large gardens and parks. There he lives now, and every day guests come from all over the world to pay him homage. Truly the life of the great Farinelli could have been most enviable, were he not possessed by a foolish and consuming passion.

Despite his sixty-five years, despite what Signor Uslenghi called 'the slight physical impediment' (which Farinelli, like all the great *castrati*, has to thank for his vocal triumphs), the Count could not stop himself, it seems, from falling madly in love with his beautiful eighteen-year-old niece, Marietta, who lived at his castle.

He did everything he could think of to win her affections in return, though Marietta—partly from pity and partly from calculation of her own interest—tried to cure him of the hopeless attachment. She did so, however, in a strange and not very clever fashion, by laughing at him as a senile old bachelor; and the more she mocked him, the more violently his passion developed, and the more foolish and doting he grew.

Just then a certain adventurer, called Giacomo Casanova, appeared in Bologna, and came to pay his homage to Farinelli. This Signor Casanova (or Chevalier de Séngalt, as he also calls himself) is considered throughout Italy the great idol of all women, and a master in the arts of love. It is even said that the King of Prussia and the Empress of Russia use him as their adviser in affairs of the heart—and that they pay him well for his services. 'What Frederick and Catherine do—I also can do', thought Farinelli; and after confiding

the sad story of his love to the experienced Chevalier, he asked for that worthy's advice.

'A complicated case', said Casanova, 'and unique even in my extensive experience. Not hopeless, however—no, not hopeless at all. First, of course, I shall have to have an intimate conversation with the coy young lady, perhaps give her—in your name, of course, Excellency—a valuable present, let us say an amulet. Then I shall have to go to Padua to consult my friend, the celebrated Dr San Nicolo. He is Professor at the Medical School there, and the greatest authority *in rebus eroticis*. I do not believe that the slight operation which would solve part of your Excellency's problems should be above his art. . . .'

The old man beamed, imagining himself already at his goal, and handed to Casanova five hundred ducats as an advance for the suggested amulet and also for travelling expenses to Padua; then he arranged for a rendez-vous between his niece and his adviser. After that, of course, the inevitable happened: the fine Signor Casanova eloped with the five hundred ducats and the lovely Marietta—and nobody has ever seen the two since!

Signor Uslenghi finished his story, and poured himself a glass of wine. Mama seemed to have forgotten her embarrassment, and I thought that she might, like me, have rather enjoyed listening to the tale. 'And Papa, Signore?' I asked. 'Was my father able in the end to pay homage to the great Farinelli?'

'Alas, ladies, alas', said Signor Uslenghi with a rueful air, 'the Herr Kapellmeister appeared at the Count's castle on the precise day, nay, in the very same hour, when Signor Farinelli discovered the treachery of his confidant and adviser. The double-cheated old man was running wildly through the halls of his castle shouting: "*Mariolo! Truffatore! Turfante!*" So very wisely Herr Mozart withdrew, preferring to postpone till a more opportune moment his visit to Maestro Farinelli.'

After this Mama asked for more details of Wolfgang's life, and I was very glad to hear more about Master Thomas Linley from England, of whom my brother had already spoken in his letters. It was good that he should have found a friend of his own age; one of the things he has sadly missed till now.

They met at the house of the famous Pietro Nardini, *maestro di capella* to the Archduke Leopold of Florence, who is the younger

brother of the Emperor Joseph, and Imperial Governor in Tuscany. When Wolfgang played at the Florentine Court, the Archduke had Nardini accompany him. Signor Nardini was delighted to meet my brother, seemed to have liked Wolferl's playing, and invited him to come to his house for dinner and be introduced to his favourite pupil, this Master Tom Linley.

Tom is fourteen like Wolferl, and he also travels round the world with his father, giving concerts as a child prodigy. From the very first moment, the two boys took a fancy to each other, and within an hour they had become close friends. Wolfgang, of course, rattled away in his best English, and Tom responded by airing the bit of German he had picked up on his travels. In the days which followed they were together from early morning till late at night. They rowed up and down the Arno in a boat, they ate a vast quantity of ice-cream, they were up to all manner of mischief in the narrow streets of the town—and to the delight of old Maestro Nardini, they played duets for piano and fiddle with their two fathers as audience.

But such sport and pleasant times lasted only a few days. Papa wished by all means to be in Rome during Holy Week, and neither the pleading of Tom and Wolferl nor even Signor Nardini's friendly intervention would change his mind. The boys were both in tears when they said goodbye; they embraced each other repeatedly, promising to remain friends for ever, and to do everything in their power to meet again very soon.

All through his first days in Rome Wolferl could not be comforted, and it was only later that he began to recover from the sad parting, which must have seemed to him almost like a bereavement. That Wolferl recovered his spirits even then, said Signor Uslenghi, was, he hoped he might say, due in no small measure to the motherly care and affection shown the boy by Signora Uslenghi. Mama was evidently overcome by all the kindness of the Uslenghis; she thanked the Papal Courier profusely, promising to remember him and his wife in her prayers.

So long were we talking—or rather, he was talking most of the time, and we were eagerly listening—that evening had already fallen. Signor Uslenghi rose from his chair, a sign that it was time for us to take our leave. He informed us that he was invited to dinner by His Highness the Prince-Archbishop, and very early next morning he had to travel by express coach to Vienna. We thanked him once

more, and asked him, in case he should again see Papa and Wolferl in Rome, to give them our love.

‘Your love!’ he exclaimed, when we were already near the door. ‘That reminds me—and I had nearly forgotten—there is someone in Rome, Signorina Mozart, who asked me to convey his love to you.’ I looked at him enquiringly.

‘The last evening I was in Rome’, he explained, ‘we all went to a concert which your brother gave at the Collegium Germanicum for the benefit of the students there. All of them were young aristocrats from other countries, and after the concert a youth from Salzburg came to me—he must have heard that I intended to travel through his native town. He asked me to give his regards to his father the Archi-Episcopal Chancellor, Herr von Molk. And then he asked me also, Signorina Mozart, in case you should still remember him from your mutual dancing lessons, to give you his love. May I do that now?’ Signor Uslenghi bowed politely, and dismissed us with a kind handshake and a friendly smile.

Molk, I thought on our way home, Joseph von Molk—Pepi his friends always called him. Yes, we used to dance together sometimes. He was tall, slim, and, if I remember rightly, quite handsome.

Salzburg, middle of July 1770

My dear good Mozartin,

Do not hesitate one single moment, but dash immediately to the well-known weekly market in Salzburg, and buy there two of the loveliest young geese you can find—and do not forget that the size of the liver is of vast importance. After that you should buy some ducks, four or five capons, a dozen trout, a soft, pinkish and large piece of veal, and three or four pounds of fattish beef. After that you may try to procure everything that is necessary for the wholesale production of apricot dumplings (not forgetting cinnamon and sugar!) and also all the ingredients important to the fabrication of cheese-cake, poppy-seed pastries, vanilla croissants, and nut-cakes. Then prepare great quantities of all sorts of delicacies to put into soups, such as liver dumplings, ravioli, gnocchi, etc. Thereafter

place a small barrel of beer and a good large-sized jug of Kümmel in your cellar.

Because, my revered Mozartin, I am, as you will have guessed from all these delicate suggestions, on my way to Salzburg—to you! I shall stay for three days, and in the Palace of the Archbishop I shall let my magnificent voice be heard—in two concerts, to be sure. As for my meals, however, every one of them, I shall be delighted to partake of the renowned Mozart hospitality. About the Mozart men-folk, whom I saw yesterday in Rome, I have great news to tell you. News which will be of extreme interest to you and the whole of Salzburg, which will indeed, as I venture to think, put you into a state of considerable astonishment.

Well then, I shall be seeing you soon at your luncheon-table.

Your devoted old friend,

JOSEPH NICHOLAS MEISSNER,

*Court Chamber Singer to His
Highness the Archbishop of Salzburg.*

We laughed a great deal when we read this letter, and we laughed even more when a week later Herr Meissner (a typical Salzburger, if ever there was one!) eventually appeared at our house. He was so tall he had to bend down to go through the door, and so fat he needed two chairs to sit down comfortably. Of course Mama had conscientiously bought all the delicacies he had asked for, and with Teresa's help we had baked all the cakes and prepared all the dishes to show our friend how very welcome he was in our house.

On arrival he embraced us in a most extravagant way, handed Mama a golden bracelet, and me a pair of lovely emerald ear-rings. Then he went straight into the kitchen, took the lids off all the pots to inspect what was inside, gave the bashful Teresa a hearty kiss, lifted Bimpy up from the floor and curled her round his neck, as if he were putting on a fur collar. Suddenly he threw the bewildered dog up in the air, caught her in his arms, and with much jovial laughter put her lovingly down on the kitchen floor.

Then the Court Chamber Singer (to give him his official title) asked vehemently and with full vocal powers for his luncheon. Never in my life have I seen anybody swallow such vast amounts of food with such speed—and, more's the wonder, he talked and laughed all the time he was eating. He told us of his concert tours, which had

taken him all over Europe from St Petersburg to Naples, of all the princely meals which were arranged for him, of wild card-games that lasted right into the morning, and of all the beautiful women (great ladies and little servant girls as well) who, despite his fifty years and his huge belly, had offered him their favours.

Yes, in character as well as figure, our Herr Meissner is a mighty fellow indeed, and nobody who watches his performance at the luncheon-table could conceive of the tender loveliness which he puts into an old Italian aria, a French ballad or a simple Salzburg folksong.

He certainly knows how to appreciate Mama's cooking, and feels completely at home in Drehgasse—under no sort of restraint. Two plates of soup, three blue trout swimming in butter, a complete young goose with a fair variety of vegetables—all this he had already shovelled in when he came to a tureen full of steaming-hot apricot dumplings. Twenty-five of them vanished into his throat, and each time he swallowed one, he counted loudly: 'Twenty-one . . . twenty-two . . . twenty-three . . .'—and so on till the record number was reached. 'I've done it, Mozartin', he announced at last, looking highly satisfied with his performance, and pulled himself out of his chair.

Not a single word had he yet said about Papa or Wolferl, and in spite of our impatience to hear the tremendous news he had promised us, Mama was too well-mannered to ask for it. So it was I who at last ventured to broach the subject: 'And how are our men-folk, Herr Meissner?' I asked. 'Well, did you last see my father and my brother, and were they in good health then? And please, what is the great news you promised to tell us?'

'Slowly, slowly, Mademoiselle—we'll come to that in good time', he declared. 'Yes, indeed, I have something of importance, of extraordinary importance to tell you, but the Court Chamber Singer is not accustomed to wasting his art on an audience of only two. Where is the Hagenauer family? Up with them! And the good Teresa will have to listen, too. I have much to tell!'

Now we were all really excited. I ran down to the first floor to fetch the Hagenauers: Uncle, Auntie, Ursula, and also Father Dominicus, who was just then visiting his parents. Finally we were all assembled. Teresa stood modestly at the kitchen door; and even Bimpy, who after turning round and round on the same axis ten times at least had at last settled down under Mama's feet, might

have been expressing impatience to hear the news. It was now very quiet in the room, and Herr Meissner, as was his custom, looked for a moment at his audience before beginning the first number on his programme.

'Your son, my dear Frau Mozart'—he turned to Mama—'is at this very moment the centre of an affair which has caused no small sensation in Italy!'

'For Heaven's sake, Herr Meissner', exclaimed Mama in alarm, 'it isn't anything bad—is it?'

Meissner coughed: 'If you will be kind enough to let me finish, revered Mozartin, you will be in a position to judge for yourself.' (It was quite clear to me that he had good news for us and was putting on all this fuss in order to heighten our excitement.)

'It was in Rome on the Wednesday of Holy Week', he eventually deigned to go on, 'and the Herr Kapellmeister, your worthy husband, Frau Mozart, had invited me to come with him and Wolfgang to the Sistine Chapel, to be present at a performance of Allegri's celebrated *Miserere*. It will be well known to you all, ladies and gentlemen, that this *Miserere*, one of the noblest and most beautiful works of church music, may be sung only in Holy Week, and only in the Sistine Chapel. Since the death of the great maestro, Gregorio Allegri, its composer, the *Miserere* is considered sacred, and anybody who dares to make copies of it is automatically excommunicated from the Catholic Church. Yes, even the Papal singers are not allowed to take home the copies of their parts!'

He paused for dramatic effect, and took a deep breath, as if before a new aria, while his audience waited in suspense for what would follow.

'Well, to continue: we three sat there and listened, deeply moved, to the heavenly music. Wolfgang had a look of intense concentration on his face, and held his father's hand in what seemed to me considerable agitation. On our way home he ran three steps ahead of us, humming and singing loudly, without taking any notice of the people around him. The good Signora Uslenghi was already waiting for us with lunch: a huge dish of rice stood on the table, prepared in the Italian way, with chicken liver in it, many finely chopped onions, a little garlic. . . .'

'And what about Wolfgang, Herr Meissner?' Mama broke in. 'What happened to my son?'

‘Wolfgang, my dear Frau Mozart’—and he produced another of those dramatic pauses which are so effective during his concerts, but which at this particular moment were torment to my darling Mama—‘Wolfgang would not even make an appearance at luncheon, he would not touch Signora Uslenghi’s wonderful risotto. He locked himself into his room, and there—please try to imagine it, esteemed ladies and gentlemen—there he wrote down on paper from memory the complicated masterpiece of music which he had only once heard.’

We were all amazed, and only Father Dominicus found a word to say: ‘And the prohibition, Herr Meissner, the Papal ruling? What about that?’

‘I’ll come to that presently, Father. Two days later, on Good Friday, we three went again to the Chapel to hear a further performance of the sacred *Miserere*. Wolfgang carried the music hidden in his hat. Sometimes during the singing he looked at it secretly, and from time to time he seemed to be correcting some slight mistake.’

‘What impudence!’ said Uncle Hagenauer with a laugh.

‘In the evening’, continued Herr Meissner, ‘I took the two Mozarts to a party where my old friend the *castrato* Christofori, a member of the Papal choir, was also present. Without the slightest embarrassment Wolfgang went straight up to him and asked him to sing a certain difficult passage from the *Miserere*. Good old Christofori, remembering the Papal law, but unwilling to snub this charming youth, sang the passage in a wrong and distorted way. Wolfgang laughed, seeing through Christofori’s trick. “Oh, please don’t think me such a fool—I’ll sing it to you in the right way. This is how it goes!” And much to the surprise of all present, he sang the few bars just as the great Allegri had written them!’

This time Herr Meissner stopped with a firm cadenza, as if he had now finished his performance. As intended, we all expressed admiration for Wolfgang’s cleverness; only my mother was silent. I looked at her to see what was the matter. ‘And that, Herr Meissner’, she enquired coldly, not concealing her disappointment, ‘that is the great news which was to astonish us all?’

‘Not quite, Madame’, replied the Court Chamber Singer. ‘Not quite—to be perfectly plain with you! A week later the Herr Kapellmeister received a Papal command to appear at the Vatican on a certain day and at a certain hour. And I cannot hide from you, ladies and gentlemen, that my old friend Leopold Mozart was very worried

indeed. After all, Wolfgang had deliberately transgressed against a Papal law, and any breach of that law was known to bring the direct penalty.'

'Holy Jesus! Maria and Anna!' Teresa began sobbing. 'Now they have excommunicated the little rascal. . .!'

'Herr Meissner', exclaimed Mama, jumping up in an agony of suspense, 'tell us quickly: what happened?'—and again, though for the last time, we were served with one of his famous pauses.

'On reaching the Vatican', he finally pronounced, 'your husband and son, Frau Mozart, were led into a private room, where they waited for some minutes. Then the Holy Father, Clement XIV, appeared, followed by two Cardinals and some other high dignitaries of the Church. Having extended his hand to father and son for them to kiss the ring of St Peter, he then blessed Wolfgang, of whose art and genius he had been told, and placed round him the light blue silken sash and richly jewelled cross of the Order of the Golden Spur, thereby making the fourteen-year-old boy—a Chevalier! And that, my very revered Mozartin, was the exciting news which I hoped would put you—and the whole of Salzburg with you—into a state of joyful wonder.' He breathed deeply, and concluded: 'I sincerely hope I have not disappointed you!'

No, he had not disappointed us, and even if he had succeeded in torturing us by withholding the news so long, it certainly added in the end to our joy and delight. We could hardly take it in. Ursula embraced me; Uncle Hagenauer took Herr Meissner's hand and shook it violently; Teresa ran out into the street, apparently to give the news to the housewives washing their laundry at Löchel Square; and Dominicus smiled in a way I had not seen him smile for many long months, lighting up his whole face. Bimpy barked joyfully in acknowledgment of the general mood, and of course we all pretended she had understood every word of Herr Meissner's discourse. 'What a wonderful thing!' cried Auntie Hagenauer to Mama. 'Now your son is the Chevalier Wolfgang von Mozart!'

Mama looked at her for a moment, then drew herself up proudly. 'Yes, my dear', she replied with great dignity. 'But you mean the Chevalier Wolfgang *Amadeus* von Mozart, do you not?'

PAPA and Wolferl returned from Italy at the end of March. The spring sun was shining over our little town, and many of our friends, Ursula, Resi and Sally of course among them, and also the usual Salzburg onlookers, had assembled in Drehgasse to make the occasion truly festive. Some small boys had taken it upon themselves to stand guard outside the city walls on the road to Innsbruck, and when they finally saw Matilda, the good old yellow coach, they all came running to the Hagenauer house to herald the approaching travellers. Uncle Hagenauer had put a wreath around the front door, and above it a coloured banner, inscribed 'Welcome home, Chevalier Mozart!'

We embraced and kissed, Wolfgang had to shake hands with everybody, and our Teresa, the silly goose, was so excited that she bowed all the time and called the boy 'Your Excellency' or 'Your Highness'—and it is not so long ago she was calling him 'a horrible dirty child' or 'a little street-urchin'.

'How handsome he is all of a sudden, our Wolferl!' said Resi Barisani, and she looked at him in a strange appraising way. It was more than fifteen months since I had last seen my brother, and he had gone away a child; now, for I could see what Resi meant, he seemed to have returned a young man.

Much taller than before, he bore himself very well. His rich fair locks fell down almost to his shoulder, and his grey eyes laughed gaily at the world. He gave the impression of being sure of himself, he had a certain inner dignity which I felt was natural to him; yet, though I may be biased, I doubt if any critics could find a trace of conceit, shown either then or since, to go with such assurance; but rather, he is remarkably modest. When, later that day, I was praising him for this modesty, he told me it was perhaps due to the influence of Father Martini.

'Oh, Nannerl', he said, 'I wish you had seen him! He is so wise and good, yet so poor and frugal. A very saint, as people recognise. He showed me a new world, and I don't mean only the world of counterpoint and strict musical form. No, he taught me that music is more, much more, than I ever dreamed, and that a good musician ought also to be a good, kind, helpful man! We were together every day for three months, morning and afternoon. He showed me the

scores of the great old masters, a motet by Palestrina, Luis de Victoria's *Officium*, and a *Stabat Mater* by Josquin des Prés, which is nearly three hundred years old. His beautiful narrow hands would rest lovingly on the yellowing old manuscripts while he talked to me, and the more he talked, the smaller I became, my dear little sister, the humbler and meeker. . . .

'Stuff and nonsense, my boy!' thundered Papa. 'Father Martini is a good solid theorist, decidedly useful & a teacher, but without any idea of the things that are happening outside the four walls of his library. And how should he? For thirty or forty years he has lived in his monastic cell, and he knows only the people who come there to see him.'

'But Papa', protested Wolfgang, 'they are the people who . .

Papa cut him short. 'No', he broke in, 'and a thousand times no! Music is a matter of the Great World, an entertainment for great and noble gentlemen, a diversion for beautiful ladies. Ah, my dear Nannerl, you should have heard the joy and applause that surrounded Wolfgang at the Milan Opera. You should have seen the audience at the first night of his *Mitridate*, and heard them shouting "*Evviva il maestro!*"—the entire house went wild with enthusiasm. No audience has been so enchanted by an opera since the long-past days of Claudio Monteverdi.'

'Papa, please!' said Wolfgang, looking very embarrassed.

'No false modesty, my son. That you may safely leave to the old monks in their cells. Your *Mitridate* was a triumph, and that's that!'

'And how many performances were there?' Mama asked curiously.

'Well', said Papa with some bitterness, 'you know how in such cases all the jealous rivals come out with their intrigues and campaigns of lies and slander. This time they started immediately after the opening night. Never have I experienced such ugly behaviour! Since of course we Germans cannot compete with Italians as far as lies and slander are concerned, poor *Mitridate* had to suffer. In spite of its immense success, the opera was soon withdrawn . . .'

'I am truly sorry for contradicting you, Papa', said Wolfgang, 'but I believe Mama and Nannerl should know the truth, which is that my *Mitridate* was not a success. The critics were none too friendly, and already at the second performance the house was nearly empty. Yes, it is true the audience shouted "*Evviva il maestro!*" at the first night, clapping and applauding very enthusiastically, but how are

we to know that the enthusiasm was not meant for the boy rather than the composer?’

‘I don’t wish to hear any more of such nonsense’—Papa now seemed really angry—‘Whatever my eyes see and my ears hear, nobody shall dispute with me. You have been a success all over Italy, as no young man has ever been before you. Not without very good reasons did the ancient Accademia Filarmonica in Bologna solemnly elect you a member. No, my son: your position in Italy, and, with that, in the entire world, is now assured. The sooner these Salzburgian blockheads realise that, the better for them. But let them only guess that a few malicious critics said something not too complimentary about you, or that one or two seats remained empty during a performance of your *Mitridate*—and you will have thrown away all your chances of securing a post at our Archbishop’s Court.’

‘A post with the Archbishop, Papa?’ Wolfgang asked in surprise. ‘You have never spoken to me about that before.’

It sounded as if Papa had been provoked into saying more than he had intended. ‘Well, only as a nest-egg, you know—in case nothing better turns up. It’s much too early to discuss the idea. First of all we must go back to Italy in the autumn, and make the most of all the connections we have acquired. A concert at the Vatican, perhaps one at the Court of the Queen of Naples, or an opera for the great Farinelli . . .’

‘Farinelli! Did you really meet the famous Signor Farinelli?’ Mama put her question in the most innocent tones, although giving me a surreptitious glance, which was almost a wink.

Papa looked somewhat embarrassed. ‘Meet the great Farinelli, my dearest simpleton! Do you think one meets such a man as if he were Herr Lipp or Herr Spitzeder? Maestro Farinelli lives on his princely estate, and it is harder to get an audience with him than with the Imperial Governor. I tried it twice. The first time the circumstances were . . . hm . . . not too favourable . . . and I thought it better to wait for another opportunity.’

‘And the second time?’ asked Mama, now genuinely bursting with curiosity.

‘The second time’—Papa hesitated—‘by a most unfortunate coincidence, I was equally unseasonable, alas, in my attempt to gain an audience. Signor Farinelli had been having some trouble with a young relative of his—a niece, I believe. The young lady was . . .’

hm . . . engaged to a certain Chevalier de Seingalt, and had left her uncle's castle, so I was told, to visit her fiancé's family in Venice. After two weeks she returned to Bologna somewhat . . . hm . . . mis-used, and it seems the engagement was broken off as the Chevalier had proved . . . hm . . . unworthy.'

'And had these events anything to do with your visit, Leopold?' asked Mama.

'Why yes, my dear. This time I arrived to pay my respects to the great singer only two or three days after the young lady's return. Farinelli, who apparently had the well-being of his niece very much at heart, asked to be excused, regretting that he was not at present in a state to see visitors. While one of his secretaries was giving me this message, I was obliged to overhear parts of a discussion between uncle and niece, which was becoming animated and somewhat violent—a most disagreeable situation for an innocent bystander like myself. Of course I withdrew as quickly as I could. Dear me, it was all very disturbing and disappointing. . . .'

His voice tailed away. Poor Papa, I thought, an unfortunate coincidence indeed; but Mama and I managed, with some difficulty, to refrain from smiling. Then I happened to catch Wolferl's eye, and saw he was affected in the same way; I averted my head at once.

Last month Michael Haydn's baby girl died. I know that he loved his little daughter most fondly, and that since she was born he had changed his whole mode of living. He no longer touched wine or beer or any form of liquor, he avoided his former boon companions, he worked, wrote music. His wife had changed, too; she used to be vain, superficial, only interested in her dresses, and in squandering money; but she became domestic, thrifty, and put all her pride into being the mother of Salzburg's sweetest and loveliest child.

Then the tragedy occurred, and for some time nobody saw the Haydns at all. It was said that during the day they locked themselves into their little apartment, and only left it at night to go to St Peter's Cemetery. There, according to reports—but how could anybody know?—they would for a short while stand silently in front of the little grave, and then return home in the darkness.

Wolfgang was away from Salzburg for a week or two when the baby died, and when he returned and I told him of it, he said: 'Nannerl, Michael Haydn is my friend, I must go to him.'

Our parents still disapproved of the Haydns, remembering Michael's drinking habits and his wife's vanities, and did not wish us to have anything to do with them. So yesterday Wolfgang went there without telling Papa or Mama—or even me, although I knew he was going. But I heard last night what happened at this visit, which might have been such a sad one.

Michael opened the door. He had become very thin, and his hair was almost grey. At the age of thirty-four he seemed an old man. 'It's you, Wolferl', he said in a friendly but sad tone. 'What can I do for you?'

'I came to see whether I could be of any help to you, Herr Haydn, whether there was anything you needed . . .'

'What I need, my lad, no man can give me . . . no man . . .'

From the next room the sound of a piano could be heard. Somebody played a chord, then a second, and a third, developing into a solemn melody of great beauty. The two listened silently for a while, and then Michael said: 'Come, Wolferl, come in there with me—and not a single word to anyone here in Salzburg!'

They went in. At the clavccin sat a man of about forty with a noble, expressive face, a large nose, big friendly eyes and a particularly high forehead. A man who was good and sincere, said Wolfgang, but above all—this was his first impression—a man commanding respect. He had stopped playing and looked enquiringly at the two people who had entered the room. 'A friend of mine, Joseph', said Michael by way of introduction. 'Wolfgang Mozart—or shall I rather say the Chevalier Mozart?'

'Wolferl to you as always, Herr Haydn', said my brother with a smile. Then he bowed to the stranger and politely offered his hand. 'I am glad to meet you', said the other, and the tone of his voice showed that this was no formal compliment, 'for I have heard many agreeable things about you.' Wolfgang looked at Michael, who explained: 'It's my brother, Wolferl—the Kapellmeister Joseph Haydn.'

Now nobody in Salzburg had the slightest idea that Joseph Haydn, the great composer, had come to comfort his brother. Had they even guessed it, Herr Haydn would have had no peace at all, for of course everybody would have wanted to see the composer who is so much the vogue, and of whose 'gallant style' there is continual talk. Papa does not like his music, calling it 'modern trash which will vanish as

quickly as it has arrived—no melody to it at all and no genuine feeling’.

But Wolfgang, ever since the day in Paris when he first heard one of Herr Haydn’s symphonies, had admired the composer passionately; and now, when he unexpectedly stood in front of his hero, he blushed and was so overawed he could only stammer: ‘J . . . Joseph Haydn . . . the Kapellmeister . . . you mean the great Joseph Haydn?’

The two Haydns laughed; they asked my brother to take a seat, and soon they were talking together as if Wolfgang were one of the family. He had to tell them all about Italy, the Holy Father, the first night of *Mitridate*, Father Martini—and then about Paris and London.

The great Joseph Haydn was very interested in everything. ‘Splendid, splendid, my boy’, he said in the end. ‘You don’t know how very lucky you are. At the age of fifteen I was a choir-boy who had been thrown out because my voice had broken, and I tried desperately to earn a few kreutzers as a street-musician. I lived in a garret, which did not even have a window, and I was very glad when Porpora, the famous singing master, gave me a plate of hot soup. And when I was allowed to play for half an hour on his piano, because I had cleaned his shoes and combed his wigs—then I felt I had a real holiday!’

Wolfgang listened open-mouthed to all he heard, and Herr Haydn kept on talking, perhaps because he liked the boy, but perhaps also because he wanted to distract his brother’s mind from the sad bereavement. He told them how after many an adventure he finally became Kapellmeister to Prince Esterhazy, whom all the world calls The Magnificent, and how even now he had to appear every morning at the bedside of His Highness, along with all the secretaries, and also the cooks, coach-drivers, grooms, stove-stokers and chambermaids, to take the royal orders. Every week, it seems, for the diversion of the Prince or his guests, he is obliged to write a piece of music, practise it with the orchestra, and perform it on the Sunday.

Herr Haydn spoke also of his more personal life, and from what he said Wolfgang could see how his musicians loved him; they called him ‘Papa Haydn’, though apparently he is not yet forty. The great composer even told Wolfgang that some years earlier he had fallen in love with Resi Keller, a barber’s daughter, but she would not have him. And so, though he himself could hardly explain why, he had married her elder sister, a quarrelsome nagging church devotee.

‘And now you’re stuck with her’, Michael observed bitterly. ‘Stuck with that infernal beast.’

Herr Joseph Haydn sighed, and then turned to Wolfgang, perhaps to change the unpleasant subject. ‘Well’, he asked, ‘and what is our young friend writing at the moment?’

‘I am trying my hand at a *Pegina Coeli*, Master, and I want to write an *Exsultate*. . . .’

‘Church music!’ broke in Herr Haydn. ‘For goodness’ sake, Wolfgang, they pay badly for that! The sooner you give that up, the better for you. You can make more money with a bagpipe than with Offer-tories and Masses. And Money, Wolfgang, you must remember, is spelt with a very large capital M, whether you are a cobbler or a composer!’

‘I shall remember, Master—or may I say: Papa Haydn?’

The three of them laughed, and the great Haydn seemed to have taken a strong liking to my brother.

All this Wolferl told me last night in great secrecy. His cheeks were red with excitement, and I had to give him my very solemn word of honour not to mention his experience to anybody. And I believe that he enjoyed this afternoon with Joseph and Michael Haydn more than all the receptions with Archduke Leopold or the Queen of Naples and the rest, or even—God will forgive me for the sin—at the Vatican with the Holy Father himself.

Salzburg, May 1772

ONE day, quite suddenly, all four of us realised that our apartment in the Hagenauer house was somehow becoming too small for us; and so, while Papa and Wolfgang were once more in Italy, Mama and I set about looking for a house where we Mozarts (how shall I put it?) could live more in accordance with our rank.

We found one in Hannibal Square in the new part of the town on the other side of the river Salzach. Not too large, but not too small either, with a kitchen, sitting-room and quite a large drawing-room on the ground-floor, beautiful light bedrooms above, and on top,

right under the roof, a room of his own for Wolfgang, where he would be undisturbed and could practise and study and compose to his heart's content.

At first Auntie Hagenauer was very unhappy about our moving. 'And what am I supposed to do', she complained, 'if I feel in the mood for a little gossip with my friend Frau Mozart?'

'Well, then', Uncle Hagenauer soothed her, 'you simply walk over the bridge and have your gossip; it's only three hundred yards.'

But she shook her head, unconvinced. 'Three hundred yards to see my son Kajetan at St Peter's Chapter-House, three hundred yards to see Frau Mozart in Hannibal Square, and soon, I dare say, three hundred yards to see Ursula when she gets married. I suppose in my old age I shall have to be running around all the time.'

For the next month and a half Mama, Teresa and I were busy whitewashing the walls, cleaning the floors and tiles and windows, and generally making everything spick and span for the return of Papa and Wolfgang. But then, on the very day of their homecoming, indeed at the very minute when Matilda passed the bridge over the Salzach, came the shock which was to mar our joy in their return and theirs in the new house.

For just at that minute the mighty bells of the Cathedral began ringing; people ran out of their houses, knelt down in the streets and crossed themselves, as from one to the other the grievous tidings spread: after twenty years of kindly and tolerant rule, our Prince-Archbishop had died. Papa was told the news as soon as he alighted from the coach, and his first words were: 'He was a great friend of music, and we musicians have lost more in him than have all the other Salzburgers.'

Then we showed them over the house, and forgot our grief a little in hearing all about Italy, where Wolfgang seems to be acquiring a musical halo—especially in Milan, where they were much enraptured by his *Serenata Pastorale*. The Hagenauers came over in the evening, and Papa had to tell them all the stories, including one he had not told us before—about the concert where Wolfgang had to take off his gold signet ring, on the express demand of the whole audience, so they should see he was not a magician in league with the dark powers. (My little brother a wicked wizard—we all had a very good laugh!)

But soon, like everybody else in Salzburg, we could talk of nothing

else but the Archbishop's death and of who might become his successor. We were all agreed that the obvious and worthy choice could only be our friend and protector, Count Zeyll, Suffragan Bishop of the Cathedral Chapter. He was kind and helpful and frank with everybody, and after the blessed Sigismund himself there was nobody in Salzburg who was more popular. Only Uncle Hagenauer had any doubts. 'Well', he said, 'and what happens if Count Zeyll retires as a candidate before the election?'

'Retires?' laughed Papa. 'You don't believe that, do you, Johann? Who would retire of his own free will with the chance of election to the highest post open to a priest in the Holy Roman Empire?'

'Ah, Leopold', Uncle Hagenauer rejoined, 'but I don't mean of his own free will.'

'And who, pray, could force him?' asked Mama.

'There are powers around us', came the reply, 'of which we know but little as yet. Political powers, I mean, for whom friendliness and kindness and the people's love are nothing but empty phrases. We have been sheltered from them, my dear ones, but they are strong powers who know how to carry through their will.'

It turned out that he was right. The election lasted over a week; the bishops and deans and abbots, the Pope's representatives and those of the Empress, all sat together behind closed doors and bargained to and fro. Then, on 14th March, at six in the evening, the doors to the Chapter-House balcony were opened and four trumpeters played a fanfare, after which the Archi-Episcopal Chancellor, Herr von Mlk, appeared, opened a parchment roll with great solemnity, and called down to the crowd, listening breathlessly, the single word: 'Hieronymus!'

Again the fanfare sounded, but of applause, hand-claps, rejoicing—there was none whatever; the crowd was speechless, stunned and horrified. But in the silence one voice was heard loud and distinct, just after the second fanfare had finished, and it seemed to express the crowd's feelings. It was the voice of a baker's apprentice, who was just passing the square and who exclaimed with a curious cogency: 'Good Heavens, there's a pretty kettle of fish!'

A month later Hieronymus, Count Colloredo, was enthroned in Salzburg Cathedral as our new Prince-Archbishop. Respectfully, with our heads uncovered, we all stood in the streets; but when the procession passed I did not notice any enthusiasm. I did not hear

shouts of '*Vivat!*'—one could sense only a general sadness and an apprehension over what was to come.

Everything had happened just as Uncle Hagenauer predicted: the friendly and unassuming Count Zeyll had resigned before the election (as a consolation he was given the Bishopric of Chiemsee), and Colloredo, son of the Empress' mighty Minister of State, nephew and cousin to generals, ambassadors and wealthy land-owners, had become our new sovereign. In the simple, meagre procession after the enthronement, the people saw a man of medium height, about forty, insignificant-looking for all his splendid bishop's robes, with cold sharp eyes. He walked under the canopy not glancing to right or left, clearly wishing to get the painful masquerade over as quickly as possible—perhaps so that he could start immediately on the business of ruling the country.

Soon enough came the rumours of reforms, dismissals, and measures for saving money. One afternoon an Archi-Episcopal runner appeared quite unexpectedly at Hannibal Square, summoning my brother to the Residence. Wolferl was not given time to assume his full 'court dress'. Hastily he put on his white wig, and rushed off with the servant, accompanied by our somewhat anxious wishes.

Four hours later—we were just having our dinner—Wolfgang returned. He seemed very tired, ate little, and gave polite but evasive answers to all Papa's questions; Mama and I did not bother him, for we could see he was not inclined to talk, and I myself had good hopes that he would deliver his impressions to me privately. Soon he rose from the table, made his apologies and went up to his room.

An hour later, when I was in bed and almost asleep, he knocked at my door, came in and sat down by my bed. He kept pulling nervously at the lobe of his right ear, and fidgeting from one leg to the other—two habits which I have noticed in him of late—and I could see he wanted to pour out his heart to me; but at first he said nothing, and only stroked my hand. 'Well, Wolferl', I asked finally, 'is the new Archbishop our friend or our foe?'

'Friend or foe?' he replied. 'If it were only as easy as that, my darling sister, to divide people into friends and foes! For three whole hours I have been alone with him—he was rude to me, then friendly and understanding, then suddenly hard and unpleasant once more. On his writing desk, believe it or not, Nannerl, stand the busts of Voltaire and Rousseau, who are blasphemers and unbelievers. People

say indeed that Hieronymus is a philosopher, that he has studied mathematics, that he is an enlightened man who wants to build schools and hospitals and homes for old people . . .’

‘He seems anyhow to have made a great impression on you’, I put in.

‘Yes, Nannerl, you *are* much impressed by him, and then again you hate him because of his abrupt way of speaking, and almost despise him because he cannot look you in the eyes—he seems to look straight through you as if you were air. And yet once or twice I felt I had caught in *his* eyes an imploring look as if to say: “Believe me, I am not after all a sour and arrogant fellow, I am only unhappy. I want to be loved—please love me!”’

‘Then he must give you reason to love him’, I suggested.

‘Oh, I was charmed by him at first. “So you are the famous Mozart, eh?” he said in a very friendly way; but all at once his voice changed and it sounded heartless and sharp like a knife: “You’re rather short, aren’t you? I imagined you more stately, eh? I hate plain people. You must grow, Mozart—you understand me, eh? Rise above yourself.” He always seemed to end his sentences with that “eh”, as if he meant me to give an answer but hadn’t any time to wait for one.’

‘So what did you say, Wolferl?’

‘I didn’t know what to say. I just bowed and didn’t say anything. “But your father, Mozart”, he shouted suddenly, “your father is a bad servant, and impertinent as well, eh? Doesn’t work at all, travels all round Europe begging at all the courts. . . .”’

‘“With your Grace’s permission”, I interrupted, “my father. . . .” “Shut your mouth!” the Prince shouted again. “All this Salzburgian piggery has come to an end now! You people have to start working, and whoever refuses to do his duty, will be thrown out mercilessly, eh? Mercilessly”, he repeated, “mercilessly”—and he began striding round the room with huge steps. Suddenly he stopped in front of me. “What sort of salary did my predecessor pay you, Mozart, eh?”’

‘And you answered, Wolferl?’

‘I answered as haughtily as I could, to show him I was not frightened by his ranting: “I have always considered it an honour, Your Eminence, to serve the late Prince Sigismund without any salary.”’

‘“Without any salary, eh? And what did you live on—the air, eh? No—I pay my servants. Understand that. But understand this too, eh—I demand of them that they do their duty as often as I need them,

whenever and wherever it may be. From now on you shall be my *Archi-Episcopal Konzertmeister*, for which you shall draw from my pay office a yearly salary of a hundred and fifty guilders—but you will do as you are told, eh? Do you accept?”

‘I bowed and stammered something. “Well, that’s that”, the Prince continued. “Sit down now at the clavier—I will take my fiddle and you shall accompany me in a sonata by Tartini.”’

‘“I know him well, the *Maestro Tartini*”, I ventured to remark. “I met him in Bologna.”’

‘“Nobody asked you anything, eh?” barked Hieronymus, “Kindly sit down and play.”’

‘Somehow, Nannerl, Tartini’s music seemed to melt his heart. “Good, good”, he called out again and again. “Very good, Mozart, you know your craft.” I thought I would take my courage in both hands and put in a good word for Papa. In fact, my darling sister, I went so far as to ask our great new Archbishop whether it would not be well deserved if after all these years’ service he were to make Papa his *Kapellmeister*. . . .’

Wolfgang paused so long on this, as if reliving the scene, that he kept me in a most unbearable suspense. ‘And did he agree, Wolfgang?’ I breathed. ‘Is Papa to be *Kapellmeister* at last?’

He shook his head, and I could see from his face that something unpleasant was coming. ‘No, Nannerl, no’, he answered me at last, ‘very far from it. *Colloredo* put his fiddle into the case, sat down at his writing desk, and then said to me with a menacing quietness in his voice: “Your father is not going to be my *Kapellmeister*, Mozart—and you will please remember that, eh? For that post he lacks all the qualifications—not the musical ones, but the human ones. He does not know how to treat the people under him, he overestimates his own value, he is conceited and stubborn. He would like to have leave all the time, and work to him is not a question of the heart but a troublesome duty. He wishes to serve not me, his master, but you, his son, eh?”’

‘I could not bear him speaking thus about Papa, Nannerl, and I tried to protest, but he would not have it: “No, Mozart, I have not finished yet, and I warn you to be careful of your father, eh—he will never see my just point of view, and he will always bring you into troublesome conflicts. If I seem hard to you today, Mozart, I know that later you will think differently. I do it because I want to make a

success of you, as the English King made of Handel, Prince Esterhazy of Haydn, and our Empress of Gluck. Because I want to be proud of you, and only for that reason, I do not throw your father out into the street. But he remains what he is, a subaltern; and he might well be satisfied so to remain. Well, that's that, eh?"—he rose and made a gesture with his hand, showing that I was dismissed. "And now you may vanish, eh?" So I went. . . .'

Wolferl had finished his report very miserably, and I felt equally wretched. 'So the new Prince despises us', I said at length. 'He calls us beggars, he will pay you a shabby salary of sixty kreutzers a day, he keeps our father because he wants to be proud of *you*, does he?—And you, Wolferl, don't know yet whether he is our friend or our foe? My poor little brother, have you utterly lost your senses?'

'Perhaps, Nannerl, perhaps', he replied. 'Yet my musician's ears caught those hidden notes in his voice entreating, imploring for love. And is it not something at least that he wants to be proud of me—proud of young Mozart?'

Last Sunday morning, I had just taken our joint of roast pork from the oven to pour some dripping over it, when in rushed Teresa, all panting and breathless. 'Fräulein Nannerl', she called, 'Fräulein Nannerl! Herr von Mölk—he is coming to the house; he has just turned the corner of Hannibal Square!' Then Mama came in too, quite red in the face. 'You mustn't stay in the kitchen, Nannerl', she said. 'Away with that apron quickly, dear—you have a visitor.'

When I went into the sitting-room, I found Pepi von Mölk on the couch, looking very elegant in black silken breeches, a violet-coloured jacket, gold-embroidered waistcoat, a light brown wig and fawn kid gloves—all extremely '*comme il faut*'. With great politeness he kissed Mama's hand and mine, told us of his studies which he had just finished at the Collegium Germanicum in Rome, and of his plans to enter the Archbishop's service to begin his career as a diplomat. He said he hoped I still remembered him from the dancing lessons with Herr Deibel, and he would consider it a great honour if he could escort me to court concerts, to the theatre, and to masked balls.

'Of course, of course', Mama blurted out, somewhat to my confusion. 'It will always be a great pleasure for us to see the son of the Archi-Episcopal Chancellor in our house.'

Naturally I blushed, but Pepi continued to talk of his hopes and ambitions, and how glad he was to be at home again. He has a pleasant way of speaking, though I must admit it is slightly through the nose, as is customary with our young aristocrats. After he had gone, I realised something very strange and very serious: I had fallen in love. Yet when I used to meet him at those dancing lessons, why, he had seemed in no way out of the ordinary. Resi, Ursula, Sally and I had so often discussed among ourselves this 'falling in love', and we always wondered how and when it would come, what it was really like, whether we should recognise the feeling at once as different from being fond of a boy as a pleasant companion. Well, I certainly recognised it now, but the trouble was that everybody else in the family noticed it too, and Wolferl at once began imitating and exaggerating his nasal drawl: 'Oh please, Fräulein Nannerl, don't let me sigh and suffer too long. . . .'

But Mama rebuked him: 'Will you let things be! It would be quite a good match for both of them. He would get the prettiest girl in the whole of Salzburg; Nannerl is just twenty-one, received at all the courts of Europe, and admirably qualified to be the wife of a future ambassador. And we Mozarts could do very much worse than have the Mölks related to us by marriage. A good match for both of them—don't you think so too, Leopold?'

But Papa did not answer. He has had very little to say lately, and Wolferl and I fear he is brooding a great deal over our futures. 'I was asking, Leopold, whether you didn't agree with me', Mama persisted. 'About our Nannerl and young Herr von Mölk?'

Papa came out of his reverie. 'Yes, yes', he said, 'it might well be—that is, if things came to a head. Only the Mölks have their pride, and we Mozarts have ours. It would be a bad thing indeed if one day our Nannerl's heart should come between these two prides—as between two millstones. . . .'

This sounded very sinister, but I have seen Pepi again, and I must confess I am not afraid of any such millstones!

TWO summers and a winter have passed since Pepi made his first visit—eighteen months full to overflowing with happiness for me, happiness almost unalloyed. There was no morning I did not wake with the sweet prospect of being kissed by him, no night when I went to bed without the memory of such tender, thrilling caresses as I had never before even imagined.

A secret stolen hour on a lonely bench high on the Mönchsberg; five minutes on the couch in our sitting-room when Mama leaves us alone together—whether unwittingly or by design, we care not; a few seconds in front of the gate at night, and all the bliss and delight of the world are mingled in those magical moments.

He takes my hand in his, caresses it, draws me towards him—and I give him my mouth, freely, willing, unresisting. I am no more the famous virtuoso who has been received, as Mama puts it, at all the courts of Europe, whom the youths at Herr Deibel's dancing lessons—God be praised that I went to them and thus came to know my Pepi—thought aloof and conceited. No, I am a girl in the throes of her first passionate love: I feel his hands on my breasts, I press the hands firmly towards me, and all, all my yearnings are stilled in the timeless bitter-sweet moment of our good-night embrace.

I do not say that my Pepi is extravagantly clever, and there are certainly more handsome lads in the city of Salzburg; perhaps he is even a tiny bit false—which Wolferl says he can hear 'in the music of Pepi's voice', as if there were notes in it which for my brother's sensitive ear did not ring wholly true! Well, that may be; it is all one to me, for Pepi is the first young man who kissed me, who gave me his heart; and now I have him within me, for all time and whatever may come of it.

My thoughts are confused, unrestrained, perhaps overweening, so that I even blush to be putting them down on paper. Yet how can I help but confide in somebody or something, even if it be only these cold, unanswering white pages on which I now write? Ursula Hagenauer?—yes, she would have understood me once; but since last summer, when she married Siegmund Haffner, our wealthy Mayor's son, she has become so fine and particular a young lady, so hoity-toity, that my extravagant raptures would seem to her a little vulgar.

Then there is Sally,¹ but she is much too silly; she would only have giggled had I tried to tell *her* anything. (Poor girl, she was obliged to go into service, and has now become chambermaid to the Countess Lodron—though she seems contented enough there, but then Sally would laugh and be content wherever she was.) Then my third friend, Resi Barisani?—to be honest, I am a little afraid of her. Sometimes, when she sees me with Pepi, I have the feeling she envies me, that she doesn't like my being happy. No, I could not now pour out my heart to Resi.

All three of us were bridesmaids at Ursula's wedding. My Pepi was groomsman, and when I saw him standing at the altar, I told myself I would be the next one and that it must not be *too* long before I also stood before all the people as his bride—whatever the obstacles. But that was a year ago, and there has been no second wedding.

Yes, I said my happiness was almost unalloyed, but obstacles there are indeed, or rather one great stumbling-block. His family do not like me—I do not know why. Pepi says I am to take no notice, they will change their minds. They are old-fashioned and prejudiced, and he owns they might even at times be called snobs. 'But never mind, darling', he says, stroking my hair and smiling at me with his white teeth, 'give them a little longer to be won over, to see you as I do.'

'And if they don't, Pepi?' I ask anxiously. 'If they remain reserved towards me, or if they are openly hostile? What then?'

But he only laughs again. 'What then, darling? In that case, we still have each other, haven't we!—whether they like it or not.'

Of course I have sometimes been able to confide in Wolfgang, when he is at home—only, often enough, he is still the mischievous younger brother mocking at his sister's passions, and he cannot show great enthusiasm for Pepi. He says Pepi is as much of a snob as the Mölk parents, and when I hotly deny this we fall into quarrels which distress me—so that I prefer to be a listener to Wolfgang's confidences. For we are still very close to each other, and he tells me many things—I am sure of it—that he would hesitate long before touching upon with others.

Wolfgang is now eighteen. With his gay, lively, greyish eyes, his wavy light-brown hair and that graceful, easy manner of his, he looks a regular young page at court. Women still spoil him, I fear, as they

have done all his life, and this he usually enjoys, though there are times when he begins a shy withdrawal if one or the other comes too near him. This last year he has been bursting with health, and though he always says he has seen too much of the big world to be contented in Salzburg, I know he can concentrate on his work here better than anywhere else, and that therefore Salzburg must be good for him.

He has, however, been twice away from home during the last year: once in Milan, with the Archbishop's permission, and the other time in Vienna, without it.

In Milan he had an *opera seria* produced, *Lucio Silla*. But although Papa tried to conceal from us what had happened by subtle evasions and even distortions, yet these affectionate stratagems did not deceive me for a moment, nor, I imagine, did they succeed with Mama either. In any case Wolfgang himself admitted to me that *Lucio Silla* was only a *succès d'estime*, nor was he greatly surprised, for the libretto was hopeless, full of swollen talk which he could not even understand, let alone set intelligently to music.

Tired, hot and disappointed at the end of the opera's first performance, he rushed out of the orchestra pit, followed by Papa. He opened the door of his little dressing-room, and to his great surprise found himself standing face to face with Father Martini.

'You here, Reverend Father?' my brother exclaimed joyfully. 'Here in Milan, and in the theatre!'

The monk embraced him, and shook Papa's hand. 'Yes, Amadeus', he said, 'I have left my cell and come from Bologna to hear your work, because I felt you would need me tonight. I find I was not deceived in that feeling of mine. When I was told you were writing the music to *Lucio Silla*, I knew that those who advised you were expecting from you something which went far beyond your powers.'

Papa would have objected here, but the old monk gave him no chance. 'Permit me to speak plainly, Maestro Mozart. I know how much you love your son, and how much you consider him a sacred pledge which God has entrusted to your care. But greater things are at stake here!'

'Greater things than God's commands?' asked Papa indignantly.

'Greater things than glory, success, money—and small vanities. The future of music is at stake, Signor Mozart. As a musician but also as a Christian, I tell you here and now that this boy belongs to a small group of chosen ones whose task it is, by the power of their

genius, to show music the road it must travel perhaps for many centuries. Like music itself in these days, Amadeus is at the cross-roads. He will have to make up his mind, and on his decision depends not only his own future, but also the future of the art we both love. You, as his father, believe you are doing the best for him by trying to make him into a fashionable composer—one of those hundred Boccherinis or Pugnanis who today have good positions, but whose name and work will by tomorrow be forgotten. But I am striving, Signor Mozart, for the growth and development of a budding great master, and therewith for the true continuity of Music itself.'

'And this growth and development, Father', said Papa, 'this continuity of Music, will it give my son a fair 'livelihood,' will it make him a happier man?'

'The only true happiness is spiritual, Signor Mozart, and that your son will only attain if he fulfils his destiny as a musician. Compared with that all else is unimportant: material rewards, your "fair livelihood", even the earthly happiness, as men too often miscall it. . . .'

'If that is your view, Father Martini', Papa burst in, 'if you really think my son's earthly happiness must be sacrificed on the altar of your Utopian conceptions concerning the future of Music, then you have found an inexorable opponent in me, Wolfgang's father—who also believes in his genius. Nothing in this world is more important to me than to help secure for my son, with all the means at my disposal, the fame and success such genius deserves.'

'Ah yes, Signor Mozart', replied Father Martini. 'But fame and success are elusive creatures, as you have experienced here tonight. If your son follows his true destiny, perhaps fame and success will be added unto him, though this no one can guarantee. But in any case he must not strive for these as ends, for then he will surely be led astray—and they will not bring him true happiness. No, Signor Mozart, very little in this world is more important to me now than to help Amadeus, with all the means at my disposal, to become the great composer he has it in him to be, one whose work may endure for hundreds of years.'

Thus Papa and Father Martini debated and fought for Wolfgang's soul; while my brother, as he has recounted to me the events of that evening, sat looking now at his father and now at his teacher, only half understanding what was the point at issue between them. 'Why all this excitement?' he thought, and suddenly said to them: 'But,

my dearest Papa, and my dear, most revered Father—my only wish is to make music, beautiful music, gay or sad, just as I feel and as it comes to me. That is all I want, through my whole life—to make the music my heart instils in me.'

At this the two men looked at each other, and both their faces lighted up with a smile of understanding and reconciliation. If Gordian knot of mistrust there had been, then Wolfgang cut it. And during the next weeks, with Papa's full approval, Father Martini, who stayed expressly in Milan for this purpose, worked every day for many hours with Wolfgang.

During this time Wolfgang composed five string quartets, music purer and more beautiful than anything he had ever written before. I cried when I heard it for the first time, played by some friends in our drawing-room; and I knew that the noble seed sown by the wise old monk had fallen on fertile ground.

Four months after Papa and Wolfgang returned from Italy, they set off for Vienna, hoping once more to melt the cold heart of the Empress. Colloredo had moved to Gmunden for the summer, so as the cat was away, the mice could come out and take a nibble of what fortune there might be going. Even so, it was best that their departure should be as unremarked as possible, so dear old Matilda, our faithful yellow coach, drove up secretly to Hannibal Square one morning in July, and our menfolk went again on their way.

The Empress was harsh and unfriendly, even insulting. Papa had his say, and then she told him: 'I don't need any more composers. I have the Chevalier Gluck, and he is good enough for me. Why don't you two stay in Salzburg with your Archbishop?'

Papa ventured to remind the great lady how very kindly we were received at Schönbrunn eleven years ago. 'Eleven years ago', she retorted, 'the world was a very different place. The Emperor was still alive, Joseph was not much more than a boy, Marie Antoinette was still playing hide-and-seek, and I—I could still laugh. Whereas now—no, Mozart, go back to Salzburg. I don't wish to become burdened with useless people.'

With a cross, impatient movement of the hand she made to dismiss her visitors, so Papa and Wolfgang bowed and turned to withdraw. The Empress stopped them. 'But so that you should not have come here wholly in vain, take this'—she handed Papa a worthless bronze

medal—‘and the boy may visit Gluck. He may say I sent him.’

Thus it happened that one morning my brother stood shyly in front of a distinguished house in Rennweg, to pay his compliments to one of the most powerful gentlemen of our day: the Chevalier Christoph Willibald Gluck, Kapellmeister of the Court Opera. He pulled the bell-rope, the door was opened, and Wolfgang saw before him a girl of sixteen or seventeen, with auburn hair and dark eyes, slim, graceful and smiling, like a pure and radiant rose, as he wrote to me at the time.

‘Good morning, Herr Mozart’, said this beautiful creature, curtsying, and offered him her slender white hand. ‘I am Marianne, Chevalier Gluck’s niece and foster-daughter. Do come in, please. My uncle is expecting you.’

‘Thank you—thank you’, was all Wolfgang could utter. He gazed at the girl open-mouthed, and followed her as in a trance, not heeding where he was going, so that he failed to notice when he came into the presence of the great man he had come to see.

Gluck laughed loudly. ‘My young colleague seems to like you, Marianne!’

Wolfgang woke then from his dream and stammered an apology, but Gluck, with the same boisterous kindness, helped him to recover his composure. ‘I am not surprised, my dear young man, that the maid has bewitched you so quickly. Just look at our little nightingale . . .’—and again he laughed his frank, contagious laugh. But Marianne blushed, and ran out of the room in some embarrassment at hearing her praises sung.

From a wardrobe Gluck fetched a huge bottle of old French wine, poured out two glasses, indicated a plate of delicious little titbits which stood in front of him, and with a lavish gesture of his hand invited Wolfgang to take a seat and to help himself. Then he jovially raised his glass in greeting to his visitor, and drained it with evident satisfaction. ‘Well, my young friend’, he said, ‘our Empress has sent you. Sit down and tell me what I can do for you.’

So began my brother’s wonderful association with the Gluck family, and therewith the happiest time he has yet known in his life. So he wrote to me then, and has told me since, and I, with Pepi in

my heart, can well understand it. For Wolfgang (unlike me) has future parents-in-law who trust and value him, an admired idol in the Chevalier Gluck and a serene, understanding second mother in Madame Gluck. He also has, like me, the indescribable joy of his first love; while Marianne, if she be only half as good as he paints her, sounds to me wholly worthy of my brother's adoration.

Daily he went to the beautiful house in Rennweg, where servants, wealth and gracious living were matters of course. He played games of ball in the garden with Marianne, he listened with great interest when the lady of the house read aloud from new books or newspapers, and for hours on end he sat alone in the study with the Chevalier himself, listening eagerly while the great composer spoke about himself, his life and his art.

Gluck is now sixty. He comes from the Upper Palatinate, and as a boy went to Bohemia to learn a musician's craft. He began to write operas, went to Vienna, Milan, and finally to London. But there he was not very fortunate, mainly because Handel, the all-powerful, did not like him. ('His music is abominable', the great Dr Handel is supposed to have said. 'And as far as counterpoint is concerned, I dare say my cook knows more about it than this man Gluck!')

When he returned to Vienna, Gluck fell in love with and married the daughter of a wealthy business man. Not long afterwards he became Kapellmeister to the Court Opera, and Chevalier. His *Orfeo* made him world-famous, and his fame was further increased by *Alceste*. Of all this Gluck now spoke to my brother, but in the end it was not the great man's art and achievements, or the heights of success to which his efforts had raised him, that made the most powerful impression on Wolfgang. More than anything else he admired Gluck's mature wisdom, the way in which he had built up the edifice of a happy life.

Sometimes it sounds to me as if this man must be rather worldly-wise, a very different adviser from Father Martini. But Wolfgang will have it that Gluck sees realities, and only believes that musicians should be strong, independent and rich, so that they cannot be used at will—in his own words, Nannerl!—by every petty princeling, every nonentity of an impresario, or some puffed-up merchant who had made a bit of money.

Apparently Gluck had many of his precepts from his father, a

poor peasant who told his son: 'the rich man is no fool.' So Gluck advised Wolfgang that although one should not pursue money all the time, or let oneself be enslaved by it, yet it is not necessary for a good musician to remain perpetually a beggar or a gipsy. His father also told him: 'never be afraid to use your elbows'—and though there had been many cliques and cabals working against Gluck, he had quickly learnt, he said, to out-intrigue all the intriguers.

'No very saintly man', I observed when Wolfgang was speaking of all this; and he replied at once: 'No, Nannerl, and that's just what he said to me himself: "You won't think, I am sure, that I have been anything of a saint. Very far from it; more of a devil, some of my adversaries would say, and those who tried to stand in my way have had little to laugh at. I am not proud, Wolfgang, of some of the things I have done, but without them I should never have achieved my present position. I have learnt that you must keep your feet planted firmly on the ground if you don't mean to be pushed aside in the struggle."'

'Yes, Nannerl', Wolfgang continued, 'he said he had sung his own praises and blown his own trumpet whenever it fell in with his mood, and that those who criticised him most hotly for it would have done the same if they had had the chance. In fact, he believes one can be a good musician and still make good use of all one's advantages.'

If this was the gist of Gluck's advice to Wolfgang when they sat together in his study, there were other times when Wolfgang felt the master was using him as a confidant, someone to whom Gluck could air all his intimate hopes and aims.

'I am an old man', he said to my brother once, 'and it is only now I realise how many complicated musical problems are still to be solved. Sometimes I believe everything I have written up to now is wrong, and that I have a sacred duty to find a new and more personal style of my own. To what end have I made myself free and independent unless I can refuse offers which others might find alluring? Unless I can concentrate on what seems important to me? May God give me the power and the strength to write all that I dream of writing, and to build my own world as I would like to see it built.'

'Your own world—of music, Master?' asked Wolfgang.

'No, my son, not the whole of music; for that my strength is too weak. But my world of Opera, for there I think I can still achieve something which will live when I am dead. The Italians invented

opera, but now they have degraded it, made it—as a clever man once called it—“a coloratura concert with machine effects”. I want to make it what it was once and what it should always be: a drama with music. It is the true task of music in the theatre to serve poetry, so that the noble feelings which poetry inspires may be still further heightened, without the extravagant spectacles and useless adornments against which artistic taste has long fought in vain. One hears much talk these days about the coming social and political revolution; music too is on the threshold of revolution. It must become simpler if it is to remain alive. More chaste and sober, so to speak, yet rich in expression and feeling . . .’

And he told Wolfgang of the new opera he was working on, to be called *Iphigénie en Aulide*, which was to realise in practice all his new theories. Marie Antoinette, the Dauphine of France (who had had her first piano lessons with Gluck), has ordered the Paris Opera to accept the work, and to pay the composer the unheard-of fee of twenty thousand guilders!

Of course Wolfgang in those days was very often with Marianne. He made music with her, accompanying her on the piano when she sang arias by Hasse, Wagenseil or her uncle, in her rich warm voice. Naturally enough, after they had been together three or four weeks, he began to speak to her, gently and seriously, of his love; at which she listened with a rapt expression. Tears came into her eyes, then she seized Wolfgang’s hand and pressed it without saying a word, like a silent vow to belong to him for the rest of her life.

Soon after that Wolfgang found himself alone in the garden with Gluck, who, wearing his gardener’s hat and apron, and scissors in hand, was busying himself pruning the rose-bushes. It was after luncheon, and the two ladies had retired for a little siesta. The Chevalier seemed to seize an opportunity for which he had waited some while. ‘You like her, Wolfgang?’ he suddenly asked.

‘Master. . . .’ The boy did not know what to say.

‘You need not blush, my son. Marianne has told us everything. And because you have no talent for conceit, I want to tell you that my wife and I are also very fond of you, and that we do not wish anyone better for our little nightingale. My wife and I, mind you! For I believe I once told you that a musician need not necessarily be a starveling or a vagabond; and I would add that he need not be a philanderer and a dangler after petticoats. Don’t let anyone persuade

you that to find a beautiful melody you have to become a lecherous rake. I have found some good melodies in my time, in spite of being very happy with one woman for nearly a quarter of a century. Or perhaps just because of that. I don't know whether in two hundred years they will still play my music, but I dare say I may find a place in the history of music as the only composer of our century who did not put his hands under the petticoats of all his prima donnas and chorus girls! Chevalier Christoph Willibald Gluck—the great monogamist!’

The two men laughed, and then Gluck went on: ‘You shall have her, Wolfgang, and I know it will be to your happiness and ours and hers. But my wife and I have one condition, since you are both very young, and there is still plenty of time.’

I am sure Wolfgang's face fell at this, and he asked what the condition might be. ‘You, Wolfgang’, Gluck told him, ‘will have to work hard and long before you can support a household, and she too has much to learn before she achieves her aunt's excellence as a housewife. So we believe it would be best for you to wait, let us say two years. If by the end of that period you are as fond of each other as you are today, then you shall have our blessing; I shall compose my most beautiful sarabande for your wedding, and we shall dance to its melody until our feet hurt. Are you satisfied, my son?’

He looked earnestly at Wolfgang, who bent over the old man's hand and kissed it gratefully.

Papa, unfortunately, was little in favour of such plans. Certainly he would have liked to see Wolfgang become the son-in-law of the great Chevalier Gluck, but his deeply-rooted distrust of other musicians made him extravagantly cautious, and he now admonished Wolfgang to be very careful: ‘I simply cannot believe in one musician being kind and helpful to another without some strong private interest. I know the breed too well, the great ones and the smaller fry; indeed, the more important your composer is, the more likely he is to be a rascal. Believe me, Wolfgang, they are all a jealous, selfish, heartless rabble, and if, my son, you do not expect too much from Chevalier Gluck, why, you will not have cause later to be bitterly disappointed.’

Now, this was no very tactful thing to say to Wolfgang. It was almost unprecedented for him to turn against his own father, but he

was goaded into a most unusual rage. At the height of his fury he suddenly came out with what Colloredo had said about Papa at his first interview with Wolfgang. Poor Papa, I can just imagine him standing there stock still, as he always does when he is deeply moved, letting the cruel words descend on him like the strokes of a whip.

He and Wolfgang arrived in Salzburg miserable and still unreconciled. They hardly exchanged a word with each other, and even today, after nearly a month, despite all the endeavours Mama and I have made, father and son in their hurt and pride have not found their way back to each other. It is a sad note on which to end the record of so happy a year and a half.

Salzburg, July 1774

THEY call it the 'Werther-fever', and it is a sort of romantic epidemic which the whole of Europe has suddenly caught—'the smallpox of the soul', as some wag described it.

How well I remember the handsome and well-mannered boy, son of the Imperial Councillor, who came up to us after our concert in Frankfurt eleven years ago, and paid me charming compliments on my piano-playing. Well, that handsome and well-mannered boy has all at once become the famous writer Johann Wolfgang Goethe, the most interesting young man in all Germany, author of the vastly successful novel, 'The Sorrows of Young Werther'.

Yes, we have all devoured this book; we have been intoxicated by Werther's glowing love, have suffered with Lotte in her struggle between happiness and resignation, have shed many a tear over the noble young man's tragic death. Werther has become a fashion: the slim volume is not only lying, sumptuously bound in gilt leather covers, on graceful little tables in elegant ladies' boudoirs; but even our good Tercsa spells it out laboriously to herself in a torn copy which Sally has lent her.

In the theatre they have produced a play called 'Young Werther's Sinful Love and Unhappy Death'; pedlars come to our gates offering sheets of 'The Return of Herr Werther'; the cafés and inns show a burlesque, 'Werther gets his Lotte after all'; and on every fairground

you may meet Goethe's hero as a wax doll. The other day I even saw him as a scarecrow in an orchard.

Of course our little town refuses to lag behind the rest of Germany. Oh no, we Salzburgers have caught the Werther-fever too. Every second young man walks languidly around with yearning frogs' eyes, and assumes the airs of a spurned lover. The girls who before would say 'yes' so willingly, now feel obliged to keep the lads on the rack with affected doubts; and every well-known cuckold in town has achieved new importance and general admiration as if he were Albert, Lotte's high-minded husband.

The other day I could hardly believe my ears when Pepi started it too. We were sitting together on our usual 'private' bench on the Mönchsberg, and he, instead of hugging and kissing me, suddenly began to sigh, and intoned, more through his nose than ever: 'What is the heart of man, beloved maid? And what this earth to my heart without your love?'

'How sayst thou, boy? Wherefore this swollen stuff? Hast thou of thy five senses quite ta'en leave?' Supposing him in jest, I tried to cap his 'Werther' with such improvised lines of my own; but it was plainly the wrong remedy, for he now moved away to the end of the bench, and murmured with another sigh: 'Everything swims and reels before my soul, so that sure outlines I no longer grasp . . .'

At this I laughed at him outright: 'My poor Pepi, have you learnt the whole of "Werther" by heart, and did you imagine I would let you declaim it all in one sitting? Now you will please come back here and take my hand, and stop that brand of romance, which, if I may be frank, does not wholly suit you.'

But I could not calm him thus. 'All my desire is silenced in your presence, Maria Anna', he mouthed. 'The darknesses and errors of my soul disperse, and lo, I seem to breathe again.'

'Gracious Heavens!' I cried. 'Now that will be enough to be going on with. Maria Anna? Darknesses of the soul? What in the world are you thinking of? I am Nannerl, you are Pepi, and here is a bench on the Mönchsberg, where we happen to be alone. So now you may embrace me and give me an honest, hearty kiss.'

Whereupon he sighed once more, observing: 'Deluded hopes and expectations vain!' Then he put his arm round my shoulder while he looked in silence at the spires and towers of the city beneath us. And for that brief moment I felt almost as if it were not Werther-fever

alone which had caught him; I was afraid I might lose him altogether.

I have no talent for melancholy à-la-Werther. I am blissfully happy in loving my Pepi; I will hold him and fight for him. All I ask from life is that these long months of waiting may quickly come to an end, so that I may be united with him very soon, and for good.

Meanwhile the world moves on apace, and young Herr Goethe is not the only one of our acquaintances who has become the common talk of the day. Dr Mesmer, for instance, in whose garden Wolfgang's *Bastien and Bastienne* was performed, is now a very famous man.

His mysterious experiments in the end yielded the results he expected, and he has discovered something people call Animal Magnetism, which is certainly very much discussed though I have not so far met anyone who can explain what it is or how it works. It seems that Dr Mesmer can make his patients go to sleep through the power of his eyes and voice, and then make them believe they are cured of whatever illnesses they have; and then they wake feeling better at once—but I may not have grasped it properly at all.

Then there is Marie Antoinette, of course, who has become Queen of France, and all the newspapers and fashion journals are full of reports about her beauty, her elegance and her wit. She has opened wide the windows of Versailles, and let into the damp and ice-cold palace the sun and fresh air of the Schönbrunn of her youth. For which, judging by what one reads, the French people must be very grateful to her.

Our old friend Herr Grimm is among her most fervent admirers, and he certainly knows how to beat the loud drum for her in the whole of Europe. He has given up for some time now his '*Correspondence Littéraire*', and instead has become a fully-fledged diplomat. First he was Frankfurt's ambassador to the Court of Louis XVI, and then a secret agent of the King of Prussia. At the present moment he is financial adviser and also (so it is whispered) the official lover of the Empress Catherine II of Russia. Soon they say he will be made a Baron. Baron Grimm!—quite a pretty career for the son of a poor clergyman from Ratisbon.

We received a letter from Professor Bach in London. Some time ago, so he writes, he spent a few months in Mannheim at the court of the music-loving Elector, Karl Theodor, and there fell in love with the daughter of the famous flautist, Wendling. But Mademoiselle

Gustl would not have him, so he returned to London broken-hearted, and has now married a young Italian singer.

About Herr Gluck, we read that his *Iphigénie* had a splendid success in Paris. So all his dreams have come true: faithful to his conviction he has created the New Opera, and the public have followed him with enthusiasm. The Empress, back in Vienna, has appointed him Court Composer, and granted him a yearly salary of two thousand guilders. (Surely 'to him that hath shall be given'!)

And 'to him that hath not' . . . that, too, is how it worked out. For Gluck, having resigned his post as Kapellmeister at the Court Opera, instead of seizing this chance to help Wolfgang—after all, his supposed future son-in-law—recommended one of his favourite followers, an Italian too, Antonio Salieri, to become his successor. Perhaps he thought my brother was still too young for a high position, that Salieri was established and had more experience in opera, that Wolfgang was himself too independent to follow the lines of the Gluck-type New Opera. But even as I try to make these excuses for him, I cannot find any rhyme or reason in such unpardonable treachery—for so it seems to me.

The blow for Wolfgang could not have been more shattering. This last year he had exchanged countless letters with his Marianne, and whenever he received one or even spoke of her his eyes sparkled and his face lit up. His relations with Papa had remained unchanged. They said 'Good morning' to each other, and 'Good night'; but there was no sort of warmth or human sympathy between them; they had become strangers. Mama was heart-broken to see it, but there was nothing she or I could do.

But now, when Wolfgang heard of Salieri's appointment, he rushed out of the house banging the door behind him, and walked by himself for hours and hours. 'Up in the hills', he muttered when he came home late that night and Mama asked anxiously where he had been. After that he went up to his room, locked himself in, and would not speak to anyone the whole of next day. We left him alone because we could well understand his disappointment and his two-fold sorrow—for how could he now remain betrothed to Marianne?

While we were having dinner, he came downstairs, looking wild and haggard, but remained at the door of the dining-room with his head bowed. Then he addressed Papa very earnestly: 'I have come

to ask your forgiveness, my dear father, for all I said to you in Vienna, and for my behaviour to you then and since. I doubted your words, but they were all true, unbearably true. Musicians, you said, were a jealous, selfish, heartless rabble. The small fry bad enough, but the great ones even worse. A selfish, heartless rabble . . .

Here he broke down, and began sobbing like a small boy, in the most heart-rending fashion, while the three of us looked sadly on; dinner grew cold, and Papa, in a gesture of utter forgiveness, held out his hands towards the weeping boy—who could not see them for his tears.

At that time I was afraid for my brother. He withdrew from all company, he did not reply to Marianne's letters, he stopped writing music, and only very unwillingly did he fulfil his duties in the Archi-Episcopal orchestra. Normally my brother was merry and light-hearted, full of good-natured mischief and energy, but now he seemed morose and melancholy, like a true victim of the Werther-fever. He could scarcely look people in the face, and even at home he spoke as little as possible.

The change came, praise be to God, one beautiful afternoon last month, with a cloudless blue sky, a glorious June sun shining down on the whole of Salzburg, and a light refreshing breeze from the mountains. Papa was out giving lessons, and Mama was resting in her room—it was just after lunch—while Wolfgang and I were in the drawing-room. I was playing the piano for a little before going out to meet Pepi, and Wolfgang was watching me listlessly, but I could see he would soon go to his room, where he spent most of his time.

Then the bell rang, and soon Teresa was showing Resi Barisani into the drawing-room. Wolfgang, with the dark, set face that was now normal for him, tried to rush past her, but she barred his way. 'What's the matter with you, Wolferl?' she exclaimed. 'Can't you laugh any more?'

He stood there and looked at her, almost as if he had never seen her before. Then he muttered: 'Lost my appetite, Resi. My appetite for laughter, I mean.'

'And is this the way to find it again?' she enquired, a little mockingly. 'Do you hope to cure your sickness by moping round all day with the look of a man who's about to be hanged?'

'Don't know that I'm interested in curing my sickness, as you call it.'

Resi smiled. 'And all that because a girl has let you down?'

He made a quick movement, as if to escape upstairs, but she held him firmly by the sleeve. 'Don't run away from yourself, Wolferl. Why not come out of your mourning for a day like this? Look, the sun is shining for the occasion. Smile, Wolferl—to please me.'

The boy did not reply at first. I watched him looking at her silently, and then looking down on the ground. He seemed to be thinking for a while, and finally he said in a brisker, more animated tone: 'Like to come out to Hellbrunn with me, Resi? To the fountains and grottoes—and arbours?'

'Of course, Wolferl, with pleasure.' She took his hand and led him out of the house. 'With pleasure', she repeated.

Resi is five years older than Wolfgang. She is tall and slim, full-bodied, with something sensual and voluptuous about her mouth, eyes, hands—her whole body. If it was the angelic sweetness of Marianne's character that charmed Wolfgang so deeply, with Resi it can only be sheer desire—wild, burning, carnal desire.

That night he came home very late, and from then on everything had changed. He smiled again; he was often at the piano, playing and composing with his old relish; he joked with Mama and discussed his work with Papa. I was once more his 'darling little sister of my heart', to whom he could confide everything—especially his experiences with Resi. So much did he tell me and so openly, that I could be in no doubt how far things had gone between them; in his words and his voice I could hear the proud delight of a young conqueror.

Every day they lie for hours in the moss, in the cool shade of Hellbrunn's trees, and Wolfgang has now come far past the first shy touches, the first lascivious kisses. He seizes the girl wildly, finds her full firm breasts, fumbles along her body. . . . and soon the apprentice has become master, the servant a ruler.

Resi does not resist, but gladly allows him to do his will, to drain his lust dry; till suddenly she wakes, lifts his hand and puts it tenderly down again on the soft moss. They lie for a while motionless next to each other, tired from their long embrace, looking blissfully into the sun through the leaves of the trees, watching the dance of the blue-bottles which fly around them. Then again they feel the stream of desire, their lips meet, their bodies too, and the hot hands

begin their wanton play. Slowly the sun sinks, it begins to grow cool, and in the ponds of Hellbrunn the frogs fill the evening air with noisy croaking. Hand in hand, unaware of everything around them, the lovers wander back into the town. . . .

Wolfgang is happy, that I can see. And because I know this, I join my own happiness in Pepi with his. Perhaps as a partner for his first adventure in passionate love I could have wished for him someone different from Resi Barisani, someone who might better understand the depths of Wolfgang's heart. But then again I am glad, for it might have turned out far otherwise, and my brother, in his disappointment over Marianne, could easily have fallen for someone with the power to do great harm to his soul and body.

I do not know how the affair will continue, or how it will one day end, as end it must. I fear one of these hearts will be left to break, and though Resi has been one of my best friends, I can only hope that it will not be the heart of my little brother.

Salzburg, March 1775

IT is all over now, and what I have to write today will be short, so that I need not wallow in my griefs.

Through the kind intercession of Count Zeyll, Bishop of Chiemsee, Wolfgang received the commission to write a Carnival Opera for the Munich Court Theatre, *La Finta Giardiniera*. We all went to Munich in January for the first night. Pepi came with us, though I knew that he was bored by music, and Resi also came, for she can hardly bear to let Wolferl out of her sight for a single hour.

Colloredo was at that time in Munich himself, and Papa decided to send him an invitation. It was couched in the humblest and most obsequious terms—for Papa knows how to sink his pride when he feels Wolfgang's future is at stake—requesting that 'our noble Prince-Archbishop should deign to increase the magnificence of the occasion by honouring us and the whole theatre with his presence'. But 'our noble Prince-Archbishop' neither came nor even deemed it necessary to inform us he would not be coming; we learnt afterwards that he

had preferred to visit incognito a masked ball of a most dubious nature.

Papa and Wolfgang stood for a whole hour outside the theatre—Wolfgang as usual pulling at his right ear and almost dancing from one foot to the other in his anxiety and impatience—until they gave up hope of Colloredo's arrival. Inside the theatre people were already stamping and shouting and ironically cheering in a thoroughly carnival atmosphere, which they were doubtless enjoying more by now than the prospect of hearing the opera.

Pepi and I were with Resi and Mama in our box, and Pepi was in a most insensitive, irritating mood, showing me that he was less concerned for the opera's sake than for his own reputation. With that loud nasal drawl, in which I had once found so much charm, he kept demanding that something be done or there would be a riot and the whole theatre broken up. None of us took any notice of what he was saying, and I tried to quieten him. 'Please, Pepi', I whispered, 'the opera will be starting soon, please leave it . . .'

He paid no attention; it was as if I had never spoken. 'Mark my words', he groaned, 'something will happen—there'll be a scandal, a dreadful scandal, and I shall be in the midst of it. What will people say at home in Salzburg, my Papa and my Mama!'

My patience snapped at this, and I turned towards him. 'Your Papaw and your Mamaw', I jeered, 'can go to the devil as far as I'm concerned. Why should I care a rap for what those two conceited and arrogant parrots will say?'

Just at this moment Wolfgang appeared in the orchestra pit. He gave the down beat to the overture, and the opera began. I was much too excited to see or hear what was going on in the audience or on the stage, and I could hardly wait for the interval to talk to Pepi.

Then I drew him aside, and began: 'Pepi! I am desperately sorry for what I said just before. . . .' I hoped he would interrupt me, would help me out, but he remained silent, and I kept on stammering: 'I mean—what I said about your dear parents—you know I did not really mean it. . . .' I stopped because I did not know what else to say.

Pepi stood there erect, and looked at me with hard eyes. 'There it is', he said, and for the first time since I have known him there was no trace of the drawl or of talking through his nose. 'There it is. That's what comes of having anything to do with a beggarly crew of vagrant musicians!'

These were the last words I heard from him. The next day we all drove back to Salzburg in two coaches. I was in the first with my parents, and in the second rode Pepi with Wolfgang and Resi. A miserable journey, I have no doubt, for them as for me.

The following Sunday, while I was in the kitchen preparing our joint, Teresa came panting in just as she had done three years ago. 'Fräulein Nannerl', she called—just as she had done then, 'Fräulein Nannerl, young Herr von Mölk, he's coming here again. He's turned the corner of Hannibal Square.'

Soon, too, Mama had hurried in to tell me I had a visitor. 'It's Pepi, Nannerl. He has come with flowers. He wants to talk to you. To explain.'

Just as three years ago, Pepi would doubtless be sitting on the couch in his black silk breeches, violet-coloured jacket and gold embroidered waistcoat, very elegant, everything just as it should be. Only this time I did not take off my apron, nor did I run out of the kitchen into the sitting-room. I went on working in the kitchen, and could not look my mother in the face. Without raising my eyes I said to her: 'Go in there, Mama, please, and tell him that never again—never, never again, do I wish to see him!'

Mama knew that I meant it. She nodded slowly and seriously, turned towards the door and walked out without saying another word—to deliver my message.

And thus three whole years of my life, three wasted years, have come to their conclusion.

Salzburg, May 1776

WHEN the affair between Wolferl and Resi began, I was afraid a heart might break. I did not guess that my own heart was in danger there too. Shortly before Christmas Resi's father asked my brother to come to see him.

'I have known you all your life, Wolfgang', said Dr Barisani, 'and indeed I helped to bring you into this world. I have often shown how fond I am of you, so I believe I can now talk to you candidly without beating about the bush.'

'Please go on, Doctor', said Wolfgang, feeling like a small boy who has been caught in some misdemeanour.

'Right, my boy. You will have guessed the subject of our talk: this affair between you and Resi. Has it not gone a little too far? People in Salzburg are already discussing my daughter's behaviour more than I care for. You are twenty now, Wolfgang, and my Resi is twenty-five. What do you think will be the outcome of all that?' He spoke in a frank and pleasant manner, like the old friend he has always shown himself to us Mozarts.

'Well, Doctor, we are very fond of one another', was all Wolfgang could reply. 'We . . . love each other.'

'You would like to get married?'

'Get married?' My brother shrank back in dismay. 'We have not thought about that. Never seriously. . . .'

'And how long do you think the thing should go on?'

Wolfgang was silent.

'Haven't thought of that either, have you? Hm.' He paused for a moment. 'Tell me, Wolfgang, how much money are you now earning?'

'A hundred and fifty guilders, Doctor.'

'Just enough to buy a few dresses for a very spoilt young lady, and perhaps two or three hats besides. And my Resi, Wolfgang, is just such a spoilt young lady. Tell me—have you ever thought I might prefer someone else for my daughter? Someone more solid, someone . . .'

'With better prospects?' suggested Wolfgang.

'Yes, if you want it that way, someone with better prospects.'

'And you asked me to come here to tell me that?'

'No, Wolfgang, not only for that', replied the Doctor. 'It is true that I would like to see my Resi married to a man better matched to her as far as age, upbringing and rank are concerned. And if you are as fond of my daughter as you say, then you will not make things more difficult for me and for her than they already are. I would like you to promise me, if nothing else, that she will never hear of this little talk of ours. For the moment you may go on laughing with her and enjoying her company—until the . . . other arrangements are concluded.'

'Suppose I do not give you that promise?' said Wolfgang. 'What then?'

‘Nothing, my son, nothing then. I do not pretend to have any power over you—no power whatsoever. I only appeal to your heart, your reason, the old friendship between our families, and even the love you claim to feel for my daughter.’

In the end my brother sadly agreed to sustain the part Dr Barisani had assigned to him.

Four weeks later, on 27th January, we had arranged a great sleigh-ride in honour of Wolfgang’s twentieth birthday. We rushed down the Mönchsberg in our sleighs, played in the freshly fallen snow, and fought fierce battles with snowballs. Then all twenty of us came home to our house for a *faûse*.

In the evening we went over to the new Salzburg Municipal Theatre, only just opened and looking very spick and span, to see a performance of Signor Gozzi’s latest comedy, *Turandot, Princess of China*; and after that ham, cheese and beer were served again at home. The guests departed around midnight. Papa and Mama had gone to bed long before, and I left Resi and Wolfgang in the sitting-room while I went into the kitchen and began to wash the plates and dishes, knives and forks and glasses, which lay piled upon the table.

Suddenly the kitchen door was opened wildly, and Wolfgang appeared, ashen-faced, calling to me excitedly: ‘Come in here quickly, Nannerl. Our friend Mademoiselle Barisani has news for the two of us.’ He drew me into the sitting-room. ‘Here’s Nannerl’, he shouted at the girl. ‘Now tell it to her. Tell Nannerl to her face!’

Slowly, with great hesitation, Resi began to speak. What she found so hard to tell me was that she is to marry Pepi Mölk—next month. Thus has it been arranged between Doctor Barisani and the old Chancellor von Mölk. I felt as if somebody had struck me on the head with a large hammer. The old scars, which seemed to have long ago healed, suddenly broke open again. I felt anew Pepi’s kisses, his tender caresses; the room began spinning around me; I fainted.

Since then I have seen Resi only once, when she came to ask after my health a week later. ‘Nannerl’, she said, ‘Nannerl, my dear, I am afraid this will be the end of our friendship. I am truly sorry for that.’

I said nothing in reply, though I could feel she meant it, and was speaking with sincerity; at length she went on: ‘I know he will never love me even half as much as he loved you. Just as I cannot give him even half the love which I have given to Wolferl.’

'And yet, Resi', I protested, 'you have duped Wolferl—you simply dropped him.'

'No, Nannerl, not simply. I talked to my father for a long time, and Pepi confessed to me that he had tried to change *his* father's mind. In the end the families were stronger—I suppose they always are. I shall never forget Wolferl, and inside I still feel a love for him stronger than I had imagined possible. I know he will kiss many women, will hurt many of them and perhaps desert them, yet they will not be angry with him for long because his embraces will have given them such great happiness. With me it started as a little flirtation, and how it is ending—that you can see for yourself.'

She got up, wept a little, and then said her farewell. 'I had to tell you all this, Nannerl, before . . . well, before my new life starts, and because I wanted you to understand me.'

Not for the first time when the world looked very dark, Wolfgang found his refuge from the humdrum narrowness of Salzburg existence in good old Michael Haydn.

'Love stories, marriage ties, affairs of the heart!' Michael had opened a bottle of wine in honour of his visitor, poured out two glasses, and nodded understandingly. 'Yes, yes, kiss the girls, fondle them, roll in the grass with them. I've done it too, and I tell you now I am glad to be rid of all that, for little good ever comes of it. Much wiser to have some bottles of wine in your cellar and bring one of them up when you feel in the depths of misery. Much wiser. . . .'

He stopped, poured himself another glass, thought for a moment, and then said: 'Unless, Wolferl—and now comes the big Unless. Unless you find the real one, the right one.' His voice had become softer. 'I have never found her, Wolfgang—and so I have become a drunkard. My brother, Joseph, has not found her either, so now he makes love to every chambermaid and farmgirl in Esterhaz he happens to come across. Yes, he has become a true whore-monger, our famous Kapellmeister.'

Suddenly he changed his tone once more, and exclaimed with sincere admiration in his voice: 'But Chevalier Gluck—ah, there's a man you could take for a model. He found the right woman, the one, the only one . . .'

Wolfgang listened. 'Chevalier Gluck', he repeated, in a rapt, wondering fashion. 'Chevalier Gluck! Yes, Herr Haydn, yes! Now

I know what to do. You are right, a thousand times right, and I thank you most heartily—most heartily indeed.’ He had just time to see Haydn shake his head, and to hear him say: ‘Thank me? What for? I haven’t said or done anything.’

But Wolfgang was already dashing home to Hannibal Square, where he immediately sat down to write a long, glowing love letter to Marianne Gluck. In deep shame he asked her forgiveness, telling her he had suffered bitter sorrow, and his angelic Marianne, with the wonderful power of her love, could alone help him to recover from all his chagrin. He promised to adore her for the rest of his life, and vowed it would always remain his highest, his dearest aim, to become worthy of her love. At the end he asked her to give his greetings to the Glucks, and try to convince them of the sincerity of his repentance and the fervour of his feelings.

Eight days later a reply came—from Gluck’s wife:

My dearest Wolfgang,

It is with unutterable sadness that I reply to your letter today. Marianne is no more—our darling little nightingale has ceased to warble. Cut off in her prime by smallpox, she breathed her last on 22nd April. On the next day I brought her to her grave, almost exactly in the hour when my dear husband was leading his *Alceste* to its triumph in Paris. What cruel and incomprehensible connections! May God comfort and console you, Wolfgang, just as I implore Him to comfort my husband and myself.

Your affectionate

MADAME GLUCK

For the last two years there has been a burly, jovial, honest Swabian living in Salzburg—the Abbé Joseph Bullinger. He is nearly thirty, and came here as a private tutor for the sons of Count Arco, High Chamberlain to the Prince-Archbishop. He soon became a welcome daily guest at our house, and is now one of our most loyal and trusted friends.

In his plain, unaffected speech, full of Swabian phrases and dialect, he talks knowledgeably to Papa about life and music and politics and the great world; he gossips with Mama and me, and plays piquet with us; while with Wolfgang he often sits for hours in my brother’s room, telling him of the ancient Greeks and Romans, of far-off mysterious

countries, of animals, plants, and the secrets of the starry firmament. 'Have to enlarge the boy's horizon, you know', he would say. 'Mind now, our Wolfgang has still a lot to learn—a devilish lot!'

(When we first knew him, we were surprised at a priest's frequent use of the word 'devilish', but as he once explained: 'I'm only a half-educated peasant, you know, and I learnt that way of speech before I took orders. It's devilish useful, and doesn't do any harm that I can see, so I don't propose to alter the habit')

Well, when the Abbé first heard of Wolfgang's heart-aches, he said to Mama and me one day: 'Mind now, the lad ought to work more. 'Tis the best medicine for unhappy love. He should meet new people, you know, see new faces.'

So one day he took Wolfgang to the Lodron Palace and presented him to Count Arco's sister, the Dowager Countess Antonia Lodron, who is about forty, and as beautiful as she is reputed to be witty and clever. (It has even been said in Salzburg that our Archbishop's icy heart is near to melting at her beauty.)

Wolfgang was asked to play the piano, and was allowed to come again; and now last night the Abbé Bullinger disclosed jubilantly that with the Archbishop's gracious permission the Countess has decided to appoint my brother music-master to her two daughters, Louise and Amelia.

'We've done it, young Wolfgang', cried the Abbé. 'We've done it! Now you will come into a really fine house, you know; now you can show what you're really capable of. Only you'll have to work hard, my lad—devilish hard.'

Salzburg, beginning of August 1777

IT is nearly midnight, and the house is asleep, like most of Salzburg. Behind me lies one of those rare, blissful days which are worth keeping vivid in the memory, as one may do through these pages. Indeed, I almost feel I should borrow Wolferl's golden quill to write about it.

The midday bells had just stopped ringing, and I was trying to cut off some of Bimpy's thick hair, because she suffers so much from

the heat—poor old dog, she is rather blind and helpless, and I fear she is not much longer for this world. Mama was visiting Auntie Hagenauer, Papa had gone to the Cathedral with Wolfgang for the rehearsal of a new Mass, so I was alone in the house. I heard a firm knock at the front door, and went down to open it.

There stood a young Archi-Episcopal official, apparently one of the numerous secretaries who work at the Residence. He bowed, politely mentioned his name, and asked me whether it would be convenient for me to be received at the Residence in about an hour's time. 'Received by His Grace?' I asked in surprise. The young secretary bowed several times, and expressed his regrets that he was not allowed to disclose anything further. I might be sure, however, that my visit would be highly appreciated.

An hour later, having changed into an appropriate dress, I was at the Residence. The young secretary led me through a great number of corridors, halls and rooms into the West Wing, which (as I knew) was at the disposal of certain select guests of the Archbishop when they stayed in Salzburg. Before a small, circular ante-room we came to a stop. My escort knocked carefully on the door, and someone called 'Entrez'. The secretary opened the door, made a gesture for me to go in, and then retired.

I stood before the Emperor. He was wearing the simple green uniform of the *Chasseurs à Cheval*, and during the nine years since I last saw Joseph he has changed very greatly. His face is no longer thin and rather grey, but full and rosy. He has gained weight, and looks healthy and vigorous. I curtsied deeply, and he came towards me like an old friend, raised me from my curtsy, and gave me a frank, friendly smile from those very clear blue eyes which I remembered so well. 'I could not travel through Salzburg', he said, 'and miss having a talk with my dear Nannerl.'

He told me he had just come from France, and was on his way back to Vienna. He had been to Paris because his mother and he had heard the most disturbing rumours about Marie Antoinette. The young Queen, it was said, had lately become extravagant, pleasure-loving and unscrupulous. She had begun to interfere in politics and affairs of state, surrounding herself with a clique of rascals whose only interest lay in attaining quick wealth.

Joseph had declined the offer of an official reception by his sister and her husband, King Louis XVI; the newspapers were asked not

to mention his visit, and he even refused to stay at the Palace of Versailles. Instead, he took rooms in an unobtrusive little Paris inn, and walked for hours, unrecognised, through the city's poorer quarters, listening in cafés and taverns to what the people were thinking and saying about their betters. The things he learnt during these excursions surpassed his very worst fears. '*L'Autrichienne*'—as folk had christened the young Queen—was the most hated woman in France.

'What has happened to her!' Joseph exclaimed. 'Just remember, Nannerl, how pretty she used to be, how considerate, and how gifted. Today she is no longer even good-looking, and as for her character—she is shallow, frivolous, unrestrained. In the morning she advises Ministers of State on how to govern the country though she has no real care or sensibility for it. In the evening she shows the court actors and actresses how to play their parts, and in between she overloads painters, architects and jewellers with the most expensive commissions, for which she will one day be asked to pay the bill.'

'And you, Your Majesty', I asked, 'have you not tried to save her?'

The Emperor winced as if in physical pain. 'Marie Antoinette is lost', he told me. 'Finally and irreparably lost, with no chance of being saved. During my last night in Paris I sat down at my desk and compiled a memorandum which was to be handed to the Queen when I had left. In it I impressed upon her that a society which is built on frivolity and selfish pleasure is bound to collapse, unless in its midst there are people with the will and the intelligence to check such degeneracy.'

He paused, and seemed to reflect. When he went on, although he addressed me, he might have been thinking aloud. 'The French monarchy is rotten, Nannerl. It has lost its connection with the people, and therefore, I take it, has sentenced itself to death. Fate has cast my sister with a part she could never play. If she were only wise, firm-willed and courageous, I believe that she might have saved the House of Bourbon, France, and perhaps the whole of Europe. Her upbringing and her talents would have allowed her to do this, but I see now that her character must prevent it. In ten, twenty or fifty years time—I do not know when—France will go up in flames, and the fire will not stop before the golden gates of Versailles. It will consume the Queen, my unhappy sister, nor will she be the most innocent of those who perish.'

'And all that', I ventured to ask, 'Your Majesty expressed in such plain words to your royal sister?'

Joseph nodded. 'Marie Antoinette will have received the memorandum, though whether she has read it or will understand it, I cannot say. But there is one thing I know only too well: she will never learn from it.'

Quietly a servant brought into the room a small table, on which refreshments were already laid: hot chocolate and all sorts of sweetmeats. The Emperor helped ~~me~~ and then himself. He drank two cups of chocolate in quick succession, and then spoke about his lonely life in the Hofburg at Vienna.

'I still want to do so much, Nannerl', he said, and his eyes were gleaming as if suddenly kindled by a light within him. 'I want to abolish serfdom, to free the Jews, and give all my subjects the right to pray to their own God after their own fashion. I would bestow on them all, whatever their class or creed, equal rights in education and progress and justice. Great words, I know, Mademoiselle Mozart—but I am only in my middle thirties; my life lies before me, and I have learnt much during my stay in France. In Paris I was afraid the world was in decay, and that I myself was no more than a full-stop at the end of an epoch. Here at home I know I can be more. This can be the beginning of a new enlightened age: the age of Joseph II!'

He had talked himself into a state of exalted enthusiasm. Now he hastily swallowed another cup of chocolate, and ate two or three pastries.

'And the things of the heart, your Majesty?' I asked during this pause. 'Your heart?'

He put his cup down abruptly. 'My heart, Nannerl, is empty and dead. The state is my mistress; my reforms will be my children.' Then he looked at me. 'But your heart, Nannerl?' It came softly, shyly from his lips.

'Dead—and empty, Your Majesty.'

'Love, Nannerl, does not love us.' It did not sound sad when he said it, but as if he were resigned to his fate. Then he changed his tone suddenly: 'And how is young Master Mozart? Does he still know how to tune a fiddle?' ('Heavens', I thought in dismay, 'so he has not yet forgotten that incident. Perhaps he still bears my poor brother a grudge.' But I could see he had a slight smile on his face.)

'Thank you for your kind enquiry, Majesty', I replied. 'Wolfgang

—is well enough. *He* never has an empty heart, and I sometimes believe that Love herself must be in love with him.'

'Or he with her, Mademoiselle!' Joseph rejoined. 'In the end it is the same! And who, at the moment, is the chosen one?'

I hesitated, stammered something about 'Today this one, to-morrow another'—but the Emperor was much too sensitive not to see I preferred not to speak about it. Nor, I suppose, would it have been of much interest to him, had I told him that during the last year my brother has become vain as a peacock, that he sometimes stands for hours in front of a mirror, gazing at himself delightedly, rearranging now his hair and now his cravat; also that Wolfgang feels much at home in the Lodron Palace, where the aristocratic background—and the feminine society—seem to agree with him mightily.

About this last point, however, he has been very reserved with me, strangely so; and it is lucky that I happen to have another source of information there in my good friend Sally, who is still the Countess' chambermaid, and who—I regret to say!—listens shamelessly behind doors, and is not even afraid to peep through a keyhole if she wants to find out something particular. Sally certainly brings me titbits of news now and then, which I confess I am glad to have, even when they are garnered by such indelicate means.

'And with which of the two daughters is he in love?' I asked her once. 'The proud and reserved Louisa or the gay Amelia?'

'Perhaps with both of them', she answered, 'or perhaps even with their beautiful Mama.'

I looked surprised at this. 'Who knows?' she exclaimed with one of her loud laughs. 'Perhaps Wolferl is not in love with any of them—that I cannot say. But one thing I do know: the gracious Countess Antonia is quite fond of *him*.'

'You silly creature, you', I protested. 'Wolferl could be her son.' At which the impertinent minx looked at me, giggled, and remarked: 'Why should that make any difference?'

But naturally I said nothing of all this to the Emperor, nor did I speak either of Josepha Dušek, the young singer from Prague, who descended on Salzburg two or three weeks ago, began a violent flirtation with Wolfgang, and vanished after a few days as suddenly as she had arrived.

Joseph, so serious now, so full of responsibilities and scruples—in every way a contrast to his sister, but also, in many ways, to my

brother—would never have understood the motions of Wolfgang's full and ardent heart, however strenuous my efforts to explain. Yet I should dearly have liked to try, for I find in my own heart that these two, my brother and this man Joseph, though he be an Emperor, mean more to me than all the other men in the world. (I do not count Papa, of course, but as for Pepi von Mölk, I have forgotten him, and feel as if that whole episode, which I now do not even regret, had taken place many hundreds of years ago.)

I stayed in the Residence till evening. Joseph went on talking to me of his travels, his plans and hopes. In the end he kissed me on the forehead and led me towards the door. 'Thank you for your visit, Nannerl. And thank you for listening to me. We shall see one another soon again—I hope.'

I ran through the corridors and halls, out into the streets, across the Salzach bridge, to Hannibal Square, into the house, and up to my room. I was happier, more light-hearted, than I have been for a very long time.

Salzburg, 23rd September 1777

THE Abbé Bullinger has gone home now, after insisting, in that elaborately solemn manner he uses for his jokes, that I pay him the vast sum of thr- kreutzers which I lost to him this evening at piquet. He is a very kind and friendly soul, and Papa and I are truly grateful for his efforts to raise our spirits. He even succeeded in making us laugh now and then, and no one could have done more to help us over this sad day in which the events of the last few weeks have culminated.

A week after I last wrote in this diary, poor old Bimpy died; and to console us we immediately got a lively young puppy, Bimpy the Second, who is already an important member of the family and has developed a boundless adoration for Wolfgang. She has been whining all day, and I am relieved that she is now asleep, else it might set off my tears once more.

For more than a year now it has been clear to all of us that Wolfgang would do well to leave Salzburg. There is no inspiration or incentive for him here, and although he fulfilled his duties in the

orchestra in a quiet and conscientious manner, he showed no particular enthusiasm for them. (For sixty kreutzers a day—who could blame him?)

When Colloredo commanded, Wolfgang appeared at court concerts, accompanied his master, played his own little pieces on the piano, and wrote all the music he was ordered to write. The mass of his compositions is truly remarkable, and we could scarcely believe our eyes when Papa showed us the 'Catalogue of Works by Chevalier Wolfgang Amadeus de Mozart (æf. 21)' which he had lovingly compiled. Two hundred and seventy works were mentioned therein—thirty-six symphonies, fifteen Masses, ten operas, and beyond that, serenades, *divertimenti*, chamber music, orchestral music, music for solo instruments, piano music . . . and almost all virtually unknown outside the walls of our little town.

Again, as so often before, Papa's famous letters went out into the world. He wrote to Italy and France, to Germany and England; he wrote to kings, princes, bishops, abbots and wealthy merchants; he offered Wolfgang's services as conductor, composer, virtuoso and music master; he reminded prospective patrons of Wolfgang's triumphs (little remembered today) at the courts of Europe.

The practical results of all this correspondence were very meagre indeed. More than half the letters remained unanswered, and what answers there were contained the usual phrases like 'at the moment no possibility', 'the offer has been duly considered', 'highly honoured, however no vacancy'. In two or three cases, insultingly small amounts of money were enclosed with the replies.

'Am I wrong then, my friends', Papa asked Uncle Hagenauer and the Abbé Bullinger one evening, 'if I want to send my Wolferl out into the world again? Does he not belong there as much as Messrs Wagenseil, Tartini, Jommelli—or the Haydns, Glucks and Bachs?'

The others nodded understandingly, and said he was certainly not wrong; the question was discussed from every angle; and at length the Abbé offered to lend Papa a hundred guilders for travelling expenses. Whereupon Uncle Hagenauer immediately promised to add two hundred more, so that for the first time at least these expenses are assured—what good friends we still have! All that remained was to ask the Archbishop for leave of absence.

When Papa appeared with his request, Colloredo foamed with rage. 'Leave of absence!' he shouted, taking no notice of the presence

of many other applicants for an audience. 'Leave of absence, eh?—for you and your bastard? You really have the impertinence to come to me and petition for leave of absence? Do you realise, eh, that in the last fifteen years, during which you have battened on your Prince-Archbishop for your daily bread, you have had eight years leave of absence! Eight years, eh! Is that still not good enough for you? Could there still be some great gentlemen left in the whole of Christendom to whom you have not gone a-begging, eh?—and who has not thrown the two of you out? I am not good enough for you and your brood, that's it, eh? Have you found anyone stupid enough to let you abuse his favours even more than you do mine? Or are you now going off to look for such a one? Don't pretend you can't count up to three—I know rascals of your sort! Out with it, eh? Where will you be going, and with what purpose?'

Papa tried quietly to mention one or two of his well-prepared arguments. 'Parents always endeavour', he stammered, 'to put their children on the right road, so that the children may earn for themselves, as well as they can, their own daily bread. This the parents owe to themselves, but they also owe it to the best interests of their country.'

'Stupid phrasemongering, eh!' Colloredo thundered. 'Shall such an ass preach to me what is best for the country?'

'My son, your Grace, has been given talents by God, Who would have us make the best use of our talents, just as the Gospel teaches . . .'

The Prince interrupted him with a scathing bark of a laugh: 'Ha ha ha! Listen to that, eh!—now the village musician tries to teach the Prince-Archbishop what is written in the Gospel. I have let you mouth, because it amused me for two minutes to listen to your cant; but now it is enough, eh! I pay your son, and I will make what use of his talents I wish. The boy remains in Salzburg, and that is that! And if his father does not like my orders, he may go to the devil. There are fiddle-players in plenty round here, cheap as pig-food; and now get out, eh! *Dixi!*'

Thus he sent the old man away, as if ridding himself of troublesome vermin.

But then it happened that the mighty Prince-Archbishop, Count Colloredo, found himself in a position where he not only allowed the poor little musician, Wolfgang Mozart, to go out into the wide world,

but even, though with ill grace, gave his blessing to the journey.

For more than a year now my brother has been in and out of the Lodron Palace, as if it had been a second home. He played duets with the beautiful Countess, he gave lessons to the quiet and gentle Louisa, and he accompanied the gay Amelia if she felt like singing. The whole of Salzburg knew of the surprise which the Countess had prepared for the Archbishop's birthday this year, in collaboration with her daughters' music-master; for Wolfgang had had the idea of writing a concerto for three pianos, to be played by the three ladies of the Lodron household. So at the birthday concert in the big music-room of the Residence the Countess sat in the centre at her piano, with her two daughters at theirs to the left and right of her. Wolfgang conducted the little orchestra, and everybody was full of praise for the liveliness of the music and the excellence of its interpretation. But the good Salzburgers knew nothing of what happened afterwards, and had they known, they would hardly have believed it.

Colloredo was delighted with the performance, and first of all said to my brother with a complacent smile: 'That was very good, Mozart, eh! Quite pretty music—and how clever of you to choose three such charming ladies to interpret it!'

He bowed towards the three pianists, but when he observed that they had eyes only for Wolfgang, his gratification turned abruptly to one of his most savage furies, in which he determined to fell this upstart, so admired by the ladies, with a single insult. 'Yes, Mozart, quite pretty music, eh? You may cash from my treasury a special premium of one guilder. Take some of our local wenches, and give them a good time!'

Wolfgang stood as if stunned, unable to utter a word, wishing he might sink through the floor. Then he heard the voice of the Countess addressing him: 'One guilder, Wolfgang! That won't provide a banquet for what His Grace deigned to call "your wenches", but I'm sure, notwithstanding, you'll give us a very good dinner. Come!'

She offered Wolfgang her arm, and left the room with great dignity, followed by her two daughters.

So the humiliation had turned against Colloredo, who saw clearly that Countess Antonia Lodron preferred his servant to himself. But like an experienced diplomat, he was only waiting for the right moment to turn this defeat into victory.

Meanwhile, what I now found out from Sally, with very mixed feelings, was that Wolfgang had for some time been in love with Louisa, who reciprocated his sentiments. There was talk about it in the Lodron Palace, and many of the servants noticed that sometimes the piano-playing suddenly stopped in the middle of a lesson.

Sally reported, however, that between the two young people nothing more had ever happened than a brief furtive touch of their hands, or a fleeting eloquent look. Sometimes they whispered to each other for a moment or two, looking very serious and almost sad, as if they saw little prospect for their love. And perhaps everything would have taken a different course had it not been for the scene after the Archbishop's birthday concert; for Louisa now convinced Wolfgang that this was the moment to go to the Countess, telling her the truth and asking for her blessing.

How often have I laughed at French comedies when for a whole scene two characters are speaking completely at cross-purposes! But I had never expected to meet this famous farcical situation in real life, where it does not by any means seem so comical to the protagonists. Wolfgang asked the Countess if he might have a talk with her privately, and she gladly consented. 'The violent attitude of my master, the Archbishop', he began, 'gives me the courage to come to you, gracious lady, and to speak openly, as I would never otherwise have dared to do.'

'You may speak quite candidly, Wolfgang', she told him. 'You know how much we all appreciate you, and how near you are, particularly, to my own heart.'

My brother made a deep bow. 'I am well aware of all the favours which I have constantly received in this house; of the kindness, the friendliness, the—love.' He lowered his eyes, and the Countess looked at him uncertainly. Then she took his hand. 'Sit down, Wolfgang; here, next to me. And tell me what is troubling you.'

He fell on his knees before her. 'I am in love, as I have never been before. It is a pure and joyful love, my soul is overflowing with it—and I have reason to believe it may be requited.'

She looked at him, smiled, stroked his hair gently, down his head, along his ears. 'My boy', she said very softly, then drew him slowly and tenderly towards her, and bending down, pressed her lips to his in a long, fervent kiss.

Wolfgang woke up, as if from some fantastic dream. First he

murmured a wild confused 'Thank you . . .', barely audible. 'And Louisa', he stammered at last, ' . . . may I . . . tell her?'

'Louisa?' The Countess rose. 'Louisa, Wolfgang?'

'Tell her that you, gracious lady, are with us . . .'

Only then did she begin to understand. Tears came into her eyes; she sank back on the couch and wept bitterly. Wolfgang looked at her in bewilderment, then suddenly realised in his turn the horrible misunderstanding. But she had meanwhile recovered her self-control. 'Go, Wolfgang', she breathed. 'Please leave me, and go!'

A week later the Archbishop was a guest at the Lodron Palace. The Countess had invited him, and arranged that after supper she should remain alone with him. (Alone, that is, apart from my faithful Sally, who conscientiously listened behind a jib-door, one with a keyhole too.)

'Our young Mozart. . . ' the Countess said, while washing grapes in a crystal bowl, and putting them on Colloredo's plate. 'Our young Mozart, should he not go out into the world—to Munich, Paris. . . ?'

'Our young Mozart remains here in Salzburg, and in my service, eh!' Colloredo was about to put a grape into his mouth, but stopped abruptly. 'Why your sudden interest, dear Countess?'

'Perhaps because I want him to—get on.'

'Get on?' Our Archbishop seems to know more than he sometimes shows, and I realise now that there may be other listeners besides my Sally at jib-doors in the Lodron Palace, who may pass on their information in exalted places. 'Get on?' the Archbishop repeated. 'In which sense?'

'You may take it as you will, my friend. I believe that his remarkable talents would have much wider scope for expansion away from Salzburg. . . .'

'Away from the Lodron Palace, which so gladly opened its doors to him?'

'Yes, your Eminence.' She now spoke very firmly and seriously. 'Away from my house, from my daughters, and away from myself!'

The Archbishop looked thoughtfully at the grape which he was holding between his thumb and forefinger. He nodded.

'And something else, my friend', she went on. 'The request of a woman who suddenly, and for the first time, feels the coldness of approaching age: be kind to him—human—Christian!'

Colloredo kissed reverently the hand which she offered to him. He had understood. 'With the greatest of pleasure, my beautiful Antonia', he said.

A few days later Wolfgang stood before the Archbishop, who addressed him not unkindly: 'You have decided, I am told, to quit my service, eh—is that right ?'

'With your Grace's permission.'

'Good. You may go and try your luck wherever you like. But the old one stays, eh ? Is that understood ?'

'My father will consider himself very happy to be allowed to serve your Grace.'

'I have had a few letters of introduction prepared for you. Here!' He handed Wolfgang a bundle of sealed letters. 'To the Bavarian Elector, to the Bishop of Augsburg, to Mannheim . . . they will be useful on the way.'

'I acknowledge the great debt of gratitude which I owe to your Grace's extreme generosity.' Wolfgang said it without the faintest trace of acrimony or scorn, but the Prince's ears heard something they wanted to hear.

'Bastard!' he exclaimed. 'Out with you, *prestissimo*, eh! And if you dare bring yourself once more before my eyes I'll have you hunted out of my country by my bloodhounds!'

It was a heavy blow for Papa, heavier than we anticipated. To let Wolfgang go into the wide world, without a father to lead and advise him—what, in Heaven's name, might now become of the boy ? 'Who', he asked, 'will help him for money, who will keep his things in order, who will wake him in the morning and get him to bed at night ?'

'I will, Leopold, I will', said Mama, simply and lovingly. 'Is Wolfgang not my little son as well as yours. . . ?'

So this morning, after our new little Bimpy had been patted for the last time, the two of them went off in Matilda—serene, hopeful and sure of victory. Mama looked prettier than I have seen her for a long while. Her new brown travelling coat suited her well, and the impudent little hat she wore set off the coat most charmingly. As always the sun was around her; and when she saw the farewell tears in my eyes, she smiled, though I knew that she did not feel much

like smiling: 'Don't cry, my little Nannerl', she said. 'I'll come back again. Ill weeds grow apace!'

Bimpy's tail was down, and we could not blame her now for whining. Papa and I looked after the yellow coach as it turned the corner of Hannibal Square. We waited until we saw it again on the other side of the Salzach, and it vanished slowly, slowly along the road to Munich. Then we went into the house. Hardly were we back in the sitting-room when Papa suddenly put his hand to his head: 'Nannerl', he called despairingly. 'Quick, quick, we must run after them! I forgot!'

'Forgot, father? What did you forget?'

'To bless them—the boy . . . Mama!'

But of course it was far too late. Without a coach we could never have reached them.

Papa tottered up the stairs, like a very old man. I took off his jacket and his shoes, and put him on the bed. He seemed entirely broken, and all he could do was to murmur again and again: 'Forgot to bless them . . . forgot . . .' Then he slept.

In the afternoon—Bimpy had scratched for some time at the door of his room—Papa woke up, evidently refreshed. He ate heartily, drank a glass of wine, and then took the dog on her daily walk round Hannibal Square.

In the evening the Abbé Bullinger came. We had to tell him all the day's events. He nodded his head understandingly, and said: 'Well, that's that, Herr Vize-Kapellmeister. Now let us have a little game of piquet, you know; mind, now, my hands are itching to rid the young lady of some money!'

The cards were dealt, and we began to play. We played—we laughed—and we went on playing. By the end I had lost three kreutzers to the Abbé. 'And these three kreutzers the young lady will immediately put down on the table! Would be a devilish bad thing, you know, not to pay one's debts of honour! No, no—I am afraid I must insist! A devilish bad thing, Nannerl. Three kreutzers please, or mind now, I don't leave this house.'

So I paid him, laughing, and we said good night. And I was quite surprised how for two or three hours we had forgotten the great sadness which has surrounded us throughout the day.

BOOK TWO

Mid-October 1777—8th August 1782

Salzburg, mid-October 1777

THIS has been an age-long month in our diminished household. I can scarcely call it a home any longer, so quiet and empty it seems, as if all the laughter had gone out of it. We have grown accustomed to Wolfgang's occasional absences, but this one has no fixed term to it, and may even be for good. Now Mama is gone too, and that is still harder for me to bear. Through all these years she has been the prop and stay of the family, and never till now have I known what it is to be housewife in her place.

I am thankful indeed that in order to fill that place I have a great deal of work to do, and this is good physic for the baleful ennui which too often overcomes me. I listen absently to Teresa's artless prattle in the kitchen until some good-natured recollection from her mouth—how Master Wolfgang used to say this or that, or how Frau Mozart used to cook some particular dish—will throw me back into the great melancholy which I believed was half subdued.

If time goes slowly for me, perhaps it is even harder for Papa; although he at least is buoyed up by expectations of Wolfgang's success at one of the German courts. I own I have no such confidence, and my fears are shared by the Abbé Bullinger, who visits us as often as ever, and has to be apprised of all the news concerning his young friend. We read him all the letters, and then follows a discussion about the right methods for my brother's advancement.

Papa puts all his faith in the liberality of these great German princes, which he thinks will furnish an object lesson to our Archbishop. For Colloredo has given it out that he dismissed Wolfgang rather than accepted a resignation which would injure his own credit;

and Papa, still smarting from his humiliation at the Archbishop's hands, seems to have accepted this version as the truth, so he unloads all his chagrin on to the Archbishop's head. I humour him, and I believe he has now forgotten that a month ago he was pleading for Wolfgang and himself to be permitted to leave Salzburg.

'When Colloredo sees my son's triumph', Papa exclaimed lately, thumping his fist on the heavy oak table, 'it will put that arrogant upstart to shame. I am only living for that day.'

'No, Mozart', said the Abbé, 'that's not the way of it, you know. If Wolfgang is to write something great, he has got to be free, to feel himself free. Positions at court, princes' patronage and such like—mind now, they're all very fine for mediocrities, but they're not good enough for the boy. Devilish far from it, Mozart. Forget our Archbishop now, you won't change him in a hurry. Don't give yourself to useless speculations.'

'You're very much mistaken, Bullinger', Papa returned hotly. 'I'm not giving myself to useless speculations. You know that nobody in Salzburg can explain Wolfgang's sudden departure, that everybody talks of it and wonders. And you know what happened yesterday at the Archbishop's table.'

'I don't know', rejoined the Abbé, with a slight wink in my direction. 'I'd like you to tell me about it.'

Papa needed no pressing. 'Well, then', he began, 'it was after Michael Haydn had performed one of his new compositions. "*Bravissimo!*" Colloredo exclaimed. "Who'd have supposed you capable of that, eh, Haydn? A piece of excellent quality indeed. You ought always to drink burgundy in preference to beer, eh!" But Herr Haydn has a ready tongue. "I suppose I have to exert myself now, Your Grace", he said, "since the orchestra lacks one of its members." The Archbishop was silent, but Haydn continued: "We have lost a great virtuoso, Your Grace, and a passing fine composer!" That is what Haydn said to him, said right to his face.'

This is at least the tenth time Papa has told the story, and always with the same ingenuous triumphant pleasure. Then he turned again to the Abbé. 'Believe me, my dear Bullinger, the whole of Salzburg is on my side! People are shocked at what has happened, and they condemn the man who has hunted Wolfgang out of his native town. One day they will demand that Salzburg's greatest son be fetched back in triumph.'

‘Don’t talk such witless stuff,’ replied the Abbé quietly. ‘People won’t do anything of the kind, you know; they’ll shut their mouths and keep devilish silent when the Archbishop so much as looks at them severely. You shouldn’t excite yourself, nor the boy, with such swollen ideas. Let him seek his fortune in the world after his own fashion. Mind now, Wolfgang is free; free for the first time in his life. That is a devilish fine state to be in, you know. Let him first enjoy this freedom, and wait in patience to see what he will do with it.’

How truly spoken, and how well the Abbé knows my brother. From the first of Wolfgang’s letters I could read between the lines (though he would not hurt Papa’s feelings by saying it outright) that he is happy to have shaken off the chains of the last years. Not only Colloredo’s chains: Wolfgang breathes more freely now that he is away from the narrowness of the Salzburg lanes and streets, and rid too of dependence on his father.

But Papa cannot listen to counsels of patience, and he will not accept all the Abbé says. He sees clearly that the hopes of the Mozarts lie solely in Wolfgang, and has set his heart on the boy finding a post at some court—in Munich, Stuttgart, Mannheim, or better still, in Paris or London. When he speaks of it his eyes begin to shine and his face is transfigured. ‘You may trust Wolfgang’, he told us the other day, and I felt he was using more effort to persuading himself than the Abbé or me. ‘Trust Wolfgang, believe in him as I do, and the boy will not disappoint you.’

It was the very next day that the letter arrived from Munich which killed our early hopes and cast Papa into deep despair. Wolfgang reported how for days on end he had tried to gain an audience with the Elector Maximilian, who had refused to receive him—being at this time of the year dedicated to the pleasures of the chase.

Finally Wolfgang took his courage in both hands, waited in front of the Elector’s palace, and approached the great gentleman just as he was about to climb into his coach. Maximilian remembered the little boy who had given concerts at his court about fifteen years ago, and bestowed on him a condescending smile. ‘Well, well, Mozart’, he remarked, ‘so you’ve left Salzburg, have you? For good?’

‘Yes, Your Highness, and I am here in Munich to place myself at Your Highness’ feet and offer Your Highness my services.’

At this, the good humour vanished abruptly from the Prince’s face,

and he asked in a harsh, cold voice: 'Your services—as what, pray?'

'As a composer, Your Highness. I have a most burning desire to write an opera.' Wolfgang began to speak freely from his pent-up heart. 'Yes, Highness, it is my whole passion and joy. Let someone only talk about opera and I feel uplifted. I need only be in a theatre, and hear the orchestra tuning, to be quite beside myself. I know I have something within me. . . .'

I can just imagine how the words would come tumbling out, as they always do when Wolfgang is excited; and at any rate it seemed to amuse the Elector. He turned with a laugh toward the ladies and gentlemen of his retinue, who of course had followed the scene with some amusement. Then he said: 'And have you quarrelled with your Archbishop?'

'Not at all, Your Highness. I asked for leave, and at first my sovereign refused it, so I was obliged to quit Salzburg. But then he not only permitted me to go, he gave me the letters of introduction, of which I trust Your Highness has read the one addressed to yourself.'

Maximilian nodded. 'Ah yes, Colloredo's letter. Go on, Mozart.'

'In any event, Highness, I have long been of a mind to leave my native town. Salzburg is no place for me, there is no opera there. But here in Munich, at Your Highness' court—here I could write something truly admirable.'

'Write operas, Mozart! Great Heavens, you Germans were better advised to keep your hands off that, for how could you hope to rival the Italians?'

'By Your Highness' leave, I am myself half Italian. I have been there many a time, and the famous Accademia Filarmonica in Bologna elected me as one of its members. The Holy Father in Rome bestowed upon me the Order of the Golden Spur, and in Milan they performed three operas of mine. . . .'

'With what success?' the Elector broke in, with a sly twinkle towards the ladies and gentlemen attending him; it seems he knew more than my brother had thought—perhaps gleaned from Colloredo's letter.

Wolfgang began stammering then. 'I have decrees, Your Highness, diplomas, certificates. . . .'

'Any success with your operas, Mozart?' Maximilian insisted.

'I am perfectly able to serve every court. My only desire, however,

is to be and to remain near Your Highness, seeing that Your Highness is such a great patron of. . . .’

‘All very well and good, my dear lad’, interrupted Maximilian, ‘but unfortunately—there is no vacancy.’

‘I assure you, Your Highness. . . .’

‘Well, if by any chance a vacancy existed. . . .’

‘I would be a great credit to Munich, I would serve Your Highness . . .’

‘Listen, boy, what is the use of all that? *C’è nulla vacanza*, I tell you, no vacancy.’ The Elector became impatient. The young man had ceased to amuse him, and was now detaining him from the hunt. But Wolfgang tried once more: ‘Perhaps if Your Highness had only the grace. . . .’

The Elector had stepped into his coach and given the coachman a sign to drive on. ‘As I said, Mozart’, he called out once more, ‘*c’è nulla vacanza*, unfortunately—*nulla vacanza*.’ He shrugged his shoulders and gave a patronising wave of the hand, while Wolfgang stood there like a wretched little dog over which someone had thrown a bucket of cold water. The courtiers thronged past him, and he bowed deeply, murmuring: ‘I have the honour to remain Your Highness’ very obedient servant . . .’—only to find, on looking up, that the hunting coach had left and there was nobody to hear him.

‘Good, good!’ Papa exclaimed bitterly when he read the contents of this letter. ‘There need be no repining over that; this Italianate monkey Maximilian is not worthy of my son’s talents. But there are other German princes who will know how to appreciate a German musician. The boy must go to Mannheim, to the Elector Karl Theodor. He will receive Wolfgang with open arms.’

On this thought he immediately sat down and wrote a letter, many pages full of good advice, begging his son not to despair, because the mania for everything Italian did not go far beyond Munich. At Mannheim, declared Papa, the musical life was wholly German, and in many of the smaller German principedoms there were no Italians to be found at court at all. He counselled Wolfgang to put all his endeavours into earning money, to be thrifty in his spending, and never to contract any debts; to find an opportunity of displaying his powers to the Elector, but not to confide in anybody too much. ‘Common sense! And reserve! . . . Hold fast to God, who will see to everything. For all men are villains! The older you become and

the more you associate with people, the more you will realise this sad truth. . . .’

Papa read the letter to me with evident satisfaction, and he feels better now he has written everything from his heart. He is full of hope again for Wolfgang and for all of us. Just as he is plunged into deep despair by any setback, so the smallest success or prospect of success for the boy will make him ecstatically happy. When I was but a young girl, Mama used to call me a true daughter of my father. Now comes the time when my father begins to depend on me for his comfort and care, and I must indeed prove a true daughter to him, even though my own life should suffer from it.

Salzburg, 3rd November 1777

ON their way to Mannheim, Mama and Wolfgang have been staying with our Uncle Alois at Augsburg, Papa’s native town. Wolfgang was downhearted when he arrived, still smarting from his disappointment in Munich; but he soon recovered his spirits owing to the kind reception given him by Uncle Alois and Aunt Lottchen, and even more to acquaintance with their daughter Thekla.

Thekla must be about twenty, and Wolfgang always calls her Bäsle—‘little cousin’! In his letters to Papa he describes her as gay, agreeable and no less welcoming than her parents; but he has also written me a long private letter, telling me everything he would not have Papa know, and asking me when I have read it to tear it into a thousand little pieces. When I read the letter I appreciated the insistence on secrecy.

‘Bäsle’, he wrote, ‘has plump rosy cheeks, Nannerl, and fresh breasts, tight like little apples—only softer, much softer and more delicate. And something else, dearest sister: she has no ear for music at all. She is so completely and utterly unmusical that I can hardly credit it, yet this very facet in her person I find vastly enjoyable. It is not only that she cannot apprehend why one tone is high and another low; she is equally deaf to the sadness in this piece and the gaiety in that; should I play the piano in her presence, she laughs heedlessly,

and soon pulls me away. I believe she is the first person in my life for whom music means no more than a common noise, generally of a somewhat disagreeable nature. She is, in fact, the one person who is not at all impressed by my musical skill or my artistic achievements. It is novel company for me, you will own, Nannerl, and at times I can hardly keep from laughing. Yes, and laughter, God knows, is a thing I sorely need these days.

‘But you shall hear the story from the beginning, darling little sister, from the very first evening, after we had dined extremely well. I was much refreshed, but Mama, of course, felt fatigued by the journey, and Uncle and Aunt also retired early to bed, as is their custom. Bäsle offered to show me Augsburg, and I accepted with some eagerness, since there was a hint in her face that her skill as guide might take us further than the conventional sights of the town.

‘At any rate we set out together, passed the Town Hall and the Cathedral, under the Red Door, to the Water Tower, the Arsenal, and arrived at length at the Three Moors Inn. Bäsle seemed to be very well known there, and we found a quiet corner with two seats just designed for taking a girl in one’s arms and for—well, you know quite well what I mean, *carissima sorella*! The place was full of couples, who took as little notice of us as we of them. The landlord put a jug of sweet red wine on the table, laughed slightly, said “Your very good health”, wished us a pleasant evening and departed. Whereupon we set about having the very thing to which he had recommended us—an exceedingly pleasant evening.’

The impudent wretch, I thought, and laughed out loud, rejoicing at Wolfgang’s gift for putting away from him life’s distresses and seizing her delights when they are offered.

‘She likes kissing and fondling and such-like activities’, the letter went on. ‘Indeed, I must affirm it for a certainty that she went to a very good school, and she understands perfectly how to teach the things she learnt there. All over your body comes a beautiful tingling, and each guilty desire that seizes you—why, almost before you are aware of it, the girl has guessed its drift. If I may judge from my own experience, the good folk of Augsburg have vastly more skill in the art of love than we poor Salzburger.

‘We left the Three Moors Inn about midnight. Our legs were heavy and our heads were buzzing as we walked through the moonlit

streets towards Uncle Alois' house. We took off our shoes outside so as not to wake anybody, and crept like thieves up the squeaking staircase to Bäsle's bedchamber, which lies just under the roof. At the door I took her in my arms once more and kissed her in the real Augsburg manner, as she had taught me. Then she took me by the hand, opened the door softly, and led me into the room. "Do you want me?" I heard her say, as if she were far distant, somewhere in the infinity of the moon, which was now thrusting its pale golden light on to the bed towards which she drew me. I heard the silky rustle of her dress above me, around me, and I felt her warm open mouth on my lips, her fumbling, searching hands on my body, her thighs pressing my thighs. Thus we lay together. She stretched out her arms till they hung over the side of the bed, her eyes smiled, and her breasts curved like white blossoms naked before me. Then it seemed to me as if a huge cloud were darkening the moon, the small chamber, and everything within it—till all was darkness, and I could see and feel nothing in the world beyond Bäsle's hot young body. . . .

I put Wolfgang's letter down, shook my head and smiled a little wily. Bäsle has opened the door for him, I thought, into a new world of manhood. I went back to the sensitive nervous writing, the words almost flowing into each other, reflecting the agitation of his mood.

'I am happy, Nannerl, absurdly and incredibly happy, though we both know the happiness is fleeting. Every night now I lie with her, and only when we see the first rays of the sun do I creep softly back into my own room. Augsburg, to be plain with you, is an abominable place. Full of kindly people and honest burghers—so it appears on the surface. Yet on closer regard you find that these rich merchants are mean and arrogant, and all the high authorities uncivil and corrupt. I shall be pretty glad to come to a place where there is a court, and would regret having ever been in such a dismal town were it not for Bäsle, and all the wonderful, devilish naughty things (as the Abbé would doubtless say) which we do together.

'I am giving my concert, and two days later Mama and I drive on. You need not be afraid, little sister, that there will be tears at the parting, or that our hearts will break. Never have Bäsle and I vowed undying love for each other; I have taken what she offered me, and given what she desired. "Laugh, boy!" she said to me once when we

spoke about leave-taking and I became a little melancholy. "We have had a beautiful time together, and soon we must kiss goodbye. No regrets, Wolfgang, no promises and vows and hypocrisy. Simply a passing fortnight's amusement, but one we shall both remember; and now we are quits, with neither owing anything to the other." Then she became serious all of a sudden: "And if you ever need me—one never knows, boy—why, you know where you can find me."

'No, Nannerl, our cousin Thekla is not virtuous: she does not pretend that I am the first, nor that I shall remain the last. But she is truly charming, and she has given me more than all the womenfolk together who have crossed my path till now. And she has given it readily, with a smile and with gaiety. I am grateful to her.

'All other news you will find in my letters to dear Papa, but as for this small private communication—not so small either, you will say—do not forget that it is to be torn up into seven thousand and seventy-seven little pieces before being carefully burnt.'

I wonder what the beautiful Countess Antonia Lodron would say if she had an idea of the things which went on in Bäsle's bedchamber. A week ago she invited me to an afternoon's music at her palace, and after we had played duets on the piano, asked me, with an assumption of casualness: 'And your brother, Mademoiselle Mozart? Is he satisfied so far with the results of his journey?'

I told her about the Munich disappointment, of the concerts which Wolfgang intends giving, and of the hopes which he is resting on Mannheim and its music-loving Elector.

'Karl Theodor is my cousin', said Antonia simply, 'and he liked me very much when we were young. I wanted to tell you that I have written informing him that a young man from Salzburg will be knocking on his door one of these days, and requesting His Highness to receive my protégé kindly. My cousin is certainly a true lover of music, and I am sure that once he has heard our young Maestro Mozart, he will not quickly let him go from Mannheim.'

She gave me a look full of sympathy, and I, greatly moved, thanked her as well as I could. Now Wolfgang could continue serenely on his road towards success. His head was clear and his heart free; and with the Countess' intercession, my brother's future might be secure.

Such confidence I had till yesterday; when Teresa came running into the sitting-room to announce that a gentleman wished to see us.

'A very elegant and distinguished-looking gentleman', she added for good measure.

Our elegant visitor was Baron Grimm, Ambassador of the Grand Duke of Saxony and Gotha, our old Monsieur Grimm from the Paris of 1763. He told us he was at the moment on one of his delicate diplomatic missions which take him through the whole of Europe. 'A most exciting life', he declared to us in his slow, precise voice, 'but important, oh, exceedingly important for the maintenance of peace amongst the peoples of Europe. Yet never in all the turbulence and anxiety of high diplomacy do I forget my friends, from earlier and, ah, such carefree days; in which category, of course, the good Mozart family are included.'

Papa was much impressed, enquired after the health of Grimm's great friend, Madame d'Épinay, and learnt she was well. He assured the Baron that we greatly appreciated the honour of his visit, and only regretted that the Baron should be in Salzburg when Wolfgang was away on a concert tour.

'I know all about that, Herr Vize-Kapellmeister', said Grimm. 'Reports of it reached me in the course of my journey from Paris, and I was indeed present at his concert in Augsburg.' The words were spoken in a hard and rather patronising tone which distorted their affable sense. Papa, however, failed to observe the inflection, and his joy was boundless. 'You were present, you heard him play! You will have talked with him!' He turned to me: 'A friend, my dear child, look at him there. A friend indeed, even though Providence has set him so far above us.'

Grimm coughed slightly. 'I am afraid I have a disappointment for you, Herr Vize-Kapellmeister.'

My father looked at him in surprise. 'A disappointment, Baron?'

'Yes, Mozart', came the answer, in an icy voice, from which all affectation had vanished. 'Yes. Ten or fifteen years ago—my God, is it as long ago as that?—your Wolfgang was a European marvel, to which I considered it my duty to call the world's attention. As you will recall, I succeeded in procuring for him certain valuable introductions, whereby that duty was largely fulfilled. I flatter myself that it was I who discovered to the world the marvel of Wolfgang Mozart. Then for some time I heard nothing more of him till at length, it must have been four or five years ago, I heard certain rumours. Rumours concerning failures in Milan, Munich, Vienna . . .'

He paused, letting the full effect of his words sink in. But there was worse to come as Grimm pitilessly resumed his account.

'I arrived in Augsburg during the late afternoon, and entered the Three Moors Inn and learnt that a concert was taking place that evening. The posters announced that Herr Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart from Salzburg, Papal Knight of the Golden Spur, would be performing selected pieces on the piano. I admit, my dear Mozart, that I was excited, and despite everything I had been told about Wolfgang, I was sincerely looking forward to the concert. However, by comparison with my expectations, what I heard and saw later can only be described as paltry, a miserable exhibition of hackneyed tricks and trifles without any distinction. The former infant prodigy had turned into a commonplace little provincial musician. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was nothing out of the ordinary.'

'So you did not enjoy his playing, Baron?' Papa asked dejectedly.

'Dear God, enjoy. . . .'—Grimm again put on his patronising manner. 'I would not go so far as to say that I did not enjoy what I heard. It was perhaps not bad for an ordinary little *divertissement*. Only: it was not good enough for one who wants Europe at his feet.'

'And did you speak to him?'

'No, Herr Mozart; you will appreciate my feelings. I had not the lack of sensibility to tell him the truth, nor the hypocrisy to make idle compliments. I left the concert during the interval.'

Until then I had not said a word. I watched my father and then Grimm, but now I could keep silent no longer. 'So the only reason for your visit, Monsieur', I asked with ill-concealed rage, 'is to tell us these horrible and distressing things?'

He gave me a hostile look from the corner of his eyes, but for the moment did not even turn his head. 'You ask me a candid question, Mademoiselle, and you will not take it amiss if I answer with equal candour. No, it was not the sole reason for my visit. I take it that your brother is on his way to France, and that he hopes to achieve in Paris the position and reputation which have so far regrettably escaped him.'

'You are mistaken, Monsieur', I replied. 'Wolfgang is going to Mannheim. There, at the Elector's court, he hopes to become established.'

'That is possible, Mademoiselle. Possible and no doubt also desirable. Should his expectations not be realised, however, then I

consider it my duty to let you know that his chances in Paris are very slender indeed, not to say non-existent.'

'And how do you know that, Baron Grimm?' I asked stubbornly.

'From what my ears heard in Augsburg, Mademoiselle, and from my quite considerable knowledge of musical life in Paris. Your brother as a virtuoso is not good enough—we have dozens like him. And as far as his compositions are concerned, a composer whose works are not printed is no composer at all—in Paris or for that matter elsewhere.'

'And if', I said, 'rejecting your benevolent advice, he still decides to go to Paris?'

'I cannot prevent him; I can only say that he should not count on my help. And something else, Mademoiselle. If you wish to give your brother a piece of good advice, ask him to choose his mistresses with due care. Vulgar little provincial geese are certainly not advantageous to a musician's career!'

Papa had followed the discussion during the last minutes with only half an ear, and fortunately he did not catch the drift of this insinuation. For me, however, it was easy enough to guess that a gossiping landlord, a servant or a coachman in Augsburg had regaled the Baron with what must have been a town topic.

'I don't know what you mean, Baron', I said angrily, 'nor do I wish to know. It is enough that you now hold such a low opinion of the genius you claim to have discovered, and refuse to help him.'

At this point my father rose from his chair, breathing heavily and with tears in his eyes. 'Do not drop him, friend Grimm', he said imploringly. He had seized the Baron's hands, and heavy sobs shook his body. 'You have always been our trusted benefactor. Today we need you more than ever. Do not desert your friend! We are all lost if you withdraw your supporting hand. I beg of you . . .'

The old man fell on his knees, took hold of Grimm's legs, and continued to supplicate him. Embarrassed, the Baron lost some of his composure and, muttering words of reassurance, he helped Papa to his feet: 'Please, please, Herr Mozart. Please calm yourself. I promise you I shall do my utmost . . . for your sake, Herr Vize-Kapellmeister . . . my very utmost. . . '

Poor Papa collapsed into a chair. His sobs ceased, and he became a little quieter. 'Thank you', he stammered again and again. 'Thank you, Baron. I knew it . . . I always knew it. . . '

I felt an indescribable humiliation. Crumpled in his chair sat a broken old man, my father, and beside him, preparing to take his leave, the cold-hearted man of affairs we had thought to be our friend. I could stand the scene no longer, and without offering my hand to the Baron, I turned and left the room.

Salzburg, beginning of March 1778

NULLA VACANZA!', the Elector had crowed when he stepped into his coach in his splendid hunting uniform, and the words had echoed in Wolfgang's ears as he stood bowing deeply while the ladies and gentlemen of the court thronged laughing past him.

Two months later Prince Maximilian had ceased crowing for ever, smallpox having proffered him a vacancy in a coffin where he now lay in state. A few hours later his brother-in-law Karl Theodor, the Elector of Mannheim, was proclaimed Elector of Bavaria; and hardly was the funeral over when the new Elector arrived in Munich. But before all this happened, the Court of Mannheim and Karl Theodor's residence had played a considerable part in my brother's fate.

It is a period I chronicle in my diary with little relish, for I have a feeling that in these new ex-periences Wolfgang is slipping gently away from his family, not geographically, but in the realm of the spirit. He has written me only two or three further private letters, and this lack of direct communication makes my own task as a diarist doubly hard, since my own life has such small content, and the main subject of my record is hundreds of miles away. Occasionally I hear of my brother's doings from others, and any information they bring, whether favourable or otherwise, is extremely precious to me. From these sources, from hearsay, and from what I know of Wolfgang's character, I must sometimes make a guess at what has happened, and it may be that at times I shall guess wrong. But I am following King George's admonition, and trying to set down the truth 'or at least what my heart believes to be true'.

A few days ago I was again received by Countess Lodron: for music, cups of chocolate, and news! With many other aristocratic

ladies and gentlemen, she had gone to the Bavarian capital to pay homage to the new Elector, who is both her cousin and a friend of her youth. At Karl Theodor's court at Munich she learnt a great deal about Wolfgang's sojourn in Mannheim, and her report closed many a gap in his letters.

Mannheim is the capital of the Palatinate, one of the most brilliant pearls in the crown of German cities: wide straight streets, flanked by stately palaces of the aristocracy, massive business houses and *bürgerliche* dwellings; there are several large and well set-out parks, the Rhine flows majestically past; and the gay university town of Heidelberg nearby invites the traveller to savour its charm.

In the centre of Mannheim stands the Elector's palace, residence of Karl Theodor, famous throughout Germany as the most enlightened and liberal patron of music and musicians. They say he spent thirty-five million guilders to make it the centre of the arts, and though there are dozens of little German princelings who would emulate the great Louis XIV of France, Karl Theodor is the only one who might justly be compared with *Le Roi Soleil*. There must have been some fifteen hundred officials running busily to and fro at his court, which in its lavishness and prodigality had very much the look of a minor Versailles.

Karl Theodor's renowned Court Orchestra (called by a certain English traveller 'An army consisting only of generals') created an entirely new style of music-making. The Opera House, built to seat five thousand people, is Europe's largest; and at every performance five hundred guilders worth of candles were burning. Naturally the Mannheimers are mightily proud of their 'little Paris', and naturally—until this month—the splendid capital was populated not only by wealthy aristocrats, energetic merchants and virtuoso musicians, but in much larger measure by adventurers, speculators, bankrupts, and whores and pimps, all of whom danced round the Golden Calf.

The Elector Karl Theodor, now Elector of Bavaria, is a handsome burly man in his middle fifties. Intelligent and witty, amiable and good-humoured in his ordinary dealings, he is pitiless where his desires and lusts are concerned, and an unashamed libertine when it comes to women. Mannheim is full of his illegitimate children, some of whom he even received at court, making them barons, counts and countesses, and granting them a princely upbringing and education.

At the beginning of this year the favourite in the Electoral harem

was Mademoiselle Auguste Wendling, daughter of Franz Anton Wendling, Mannheim's famous flute-player: yes, that same Gustl who a few years ago refused the heart and hand of our dear Christian Bach. Twenty-four years old, a lovely creature indeed, Gustl was animated by a boundless ambition. 'A beautiful full-blown rose', she was called in Mannheim; and a rose which (to her own misfortune, some said) the all-highest nose of Karl Theodor had already smelt.

On the morning of his arrival Wolfgang presented himself at the palace, paid his respects to the haughty Count Savioli, His Highness' Grand Secretary for Music and the Theatre, and was commanded to appear the following day for an audience with the Elector.

'That is what I call an introduction', Karl Theodor greeted him. 'I have never heard my cousin Antonia so enthusiastic. Writes a letter to me, Mozart, as if you were the greatest musical miracle of all time.'

Wolfgang kissed the Elector's hand, and His Highness continued: 'I believe it is now fifteen years since you were in Mannheim with your parents and sister.'

'Yes, Your Highness, fifteen years since I had the honour. . . .

'*Eh bien !* We desire to arrange a little *divertissement* in your favour. Let us say next Saturday. There you can show us all your tricks, and there we shall no doubt discover whether La Lodron really knows something about music or'—he looked slyly at my brother—'whether she is only a *femme entre deux ages*, and a little in love.'

Wolfgang blushed, bowed deeply and listened to the Elector's orders concerning the concert: 'Our Kapellmeister and our Konzertmeister will be ordered to help you and to discuss with you all the details. Choose your soloists, decide on your programme and fix your rehearsals. Up to Saturday you have *plein pouvoir*, and on Saturday night—*on verra*—we shall hope to hear something fresh and in the highest degree *intéressant*.'

'I shall do my utmost to show myself worthy of the trust Your Highness places in me', said Wolfgang; and, encouraged by the Elector's kindness, he spoke of his hope that he might one day be permitted to write an opera for the Court Theatre.

'That might very well be the case', Karl Theodor dismissed him. 'It might very easily happen, Maestro Mozart!'

Wolfgang had written to us of course about this vastly promising

first audience, but now the account was amplified by the Countess Antonia, as she told me of it. Perhaps it was because of a hint of sadness in her voice that I ventured to ask her: 'So my brother really felt at home in Mannheim?'

'Very much so, my dear', she replied. 'The sun of His Highness' grace shone radiantly down on him, he received a handsome honorarium for the concert, and as for the small emotional disappointment which he encountered here in my house'—a fleeting note of bitterness was now clearly discernible—'he seems to have recovered from that pretty well. However, Mademoiselle, I am sincerely sorry to tell you that, how shall I put it?—private circumstances, affairs of the heart, have prevented developments which might have been extremely important for his career.'

It appears that one evening, shortly after dusk, my brother went to the shabby suburban house in Töpfergasse where the Webers lived; Herr Fridolin Weber, prompter at the Opera House, had been recommended to him as a reliable copyist. His music scores under his arm, Wolfgang mounted the steep steps past some half-closed doors from which issued the shrill howling of small children and the disagreeable smell of onions frying in rancid fat. When he reached the last door on the third floor, he heard a girl's voice of extreme sweetness. Accompanied by halting piano chords, she sang an old Italian aria. He stood there fascinated by the stream of melody until the song finished on a barely audible *pianissimo*. Only then did he knock.

The door opened, and before him stood an oldish woman, with large, dark green eyes, a wrinkled face, unkempt auburn hair, and an aura of cheap though potent liquor. She was wearing a dirty dressing-gown, beneath which could be seen the contours of a voluminous bosom. 'At your service, Sir', she greeted the visitor hoarsely, with a smile that was almost a leer. 'At your service', she repeated, and made a gesture of the hand inviting him to enter.

Just then Wolfgang heard again the voice of the girl singer; and forgetting the old woman, he went in search of her. At the end of a long passage, he entered a room where three girls were sitting round a table copying music manuscripts. Without noticing them, he followed the sound, opened the door of an adjoining room, and came face to face with the singer, an exceedingly beautiful girl of about eighteen. Her dark green eyes and auburn hair told him plainly that she was a daughter of the slattern who had let him in. Her face was

pale, with very delicate features, and the eyes had an expression which might have been either severity or sadness.

The singing stopped abruptly. Wolfgang walked over to the girl and seized her hand, saying: 'Please don't stop. Sing, go on singing . . .' He sat down at the piano, touched a chord, and as though it were all a matter of course, the girl resumed her song.

This was my brother's first fateful entry into the world of the Webers: hearing Aloysia's voice before he saw her face, playing for her before she had said a single word to him, and falling immediately under her spell. All too soon the other inhabitants of the squalid apartment saw the way things were going, and took good care that Wolfgang and Aloysia should be thrown together as much as possible.

Who are these others? Fridolin Weber, it seems, is a braggart and dreamer, boasting always of his brilliant past and bemoaning the injustices which he and his family have suffered at the hands of a malevolent world. Old Frau Weber, his wife, by turns domineering and obsequious, is always half-drunk, yet determined to get everything she wants—a sly, sneaking procuress who quickly scented in Wolfgang an easy prey. Her eldest daughter, Josepha, is lazy and false, while her youngest, Sophie, though good-natured enough, is a kind of harmless simpleton. The third daughter, Constanze, is vain and not very intelligent, a creature apparently devoid of lovable qualities; and finally, standing apart from the rest of the clan, different from them all in external merits and in goodness of heart—there is Aloysia.

If Wolfgang was spellbound from the start by Aloysia, the girl too must have realised almost as rapidly that here was a man who might raise her out of the squalor which surrounded her. At that first meeting the two of them spoke but little. They played and sang; and all the rest was done by music itself, that most magic of match-makers.

Wolfgang arrived home late that night, intoxicated by the enchanting creature who had strayed across his path. He seized a volume of Metastasio's verses which he always kept near him, and opening it at random, read '*Non so d'onde viene. . .*'. He dashed to the piano and set down in musical language all that he felt in his heart: the joys of incipient love, the fear that this love might not be reciprocated, and deep pity for his beloved's present fate:

I know not whence springeth
So tender a feeling,
This strange new emotion
Which through me is stealing,
The chill which it bringeth
Like ice to my breast.
Mere pity could never
Suffice for contriving
This feverish striving
With which I'm possessed.

Truly he had lost his heart. Early next day he rushed to the Palace, and confronted Count Savioli with the 'surprising news that he had chosen Mademoiselle Weber as the soloist for his concert. Savioli was sceptical. He had not heard of the young lady's talents, and what he knew of her family circumstances hardly qualified her for presentation at court. But Wolfgang persisted, and eventually, with a resigned shrug of his shoulders, the Count agreed to the proposal.

Thus it turned out that this concert, intended to introduce Wolfgang in Mannheim as composer and virtuoso, and be prelude to his appointment at court, became instead a triumph for Aloysia, in which my brother's part was relatively insignificant.

'Your playing is remarkable, my dear Mozart', said Karl Theodor at the end of the performance. 'And your melodies are charming as ever. That, however, is nothing new for us, we expected that from you. But your soloist—ah, my young maestro, there you have really revealed a glittering diamond in the old Mannheim rock! I congratulate you, Mozart, most heartily.' He turned then to Aloysia, who made a deep curtsy, and added: 'I congratulate all of us, Mademoiselle, because a new and most brilliant star has risen in our firmament.' Thereupon he kissed her hand with great gallantry.

Far from being upset by the strange turn of events, Wolfgang was radiant. Deluded alike by his adoration and his natural simplicity, he failed to notice that the Elector was hunting for new game, and had sighted a delightful quarry. Gustl Wendling, however, was quick to sense the danger which menaced her own position. 'Mademoiselle Weber and the Chevalier Mozart', she broke in, with elaborate stress on each word, 'are doubtless far too happy a couple to be in need even of further praise from you, Highness. Or, for that matter, of the benefit of our company. Am I right?' She smiled, nodded towards

Wolfgang and Aloysia, and drew the disconcerted Elector quickly away.

Hardly had Wolfgang slept on what he considered a vast success at the Elector's court, when a messenger arrived from the Princess of Nassau-Weilburg—our benefactress of many years ago in Holland, when Wolfgang and I performed as children—inviting him to come to her castle at Kirchheim-Bolanden, a small village not far from Mannheim, to give a concert. What chiefly delighted Wolfgang was the opportunity of introducing Aloysia to a new circle. For the sake of propriety Fridolin Weber must accompany his daughter, and that afternoon the three of them travelled by sleigh.

Built round a magnificent old castle, the village lay there in front of them, enchanting to look at, bathed in winter sunshine, with tiny houses which might almost have come out of a box of toys. The host of the Old Post Inn helped his guests out of the sleigh, led them into the parlour where a wood-fire was crackling merrily, and served them delicious punch with spiced cake. At seven o'clock a Court Chamberlain appeared and escorted them to the castle. There in the great hall, full of festive illuminations, the Princess was waiting to greet Wolfgang.

It was a long concert, for she and her guests could not hear their fill of Aloysia's voice and Wolfgang's playing; as for Herr Weber, he stalked round the floor as if all this could be attributed to his merit alone. One encore followed another, and when finally the three of them returned to the inn it was nearly midnight. The landlord insisted that even at such a late hour they should have another glass of punch; so they all settled round a heavy oak table, and old Fridolin began to talk about the wonderful nights of his youth and how he had laughed and drunk and sung in those days. He remained with the host even when his daughter and Wolfgang rose, said goodnight and went upstairs.

At the top of the stairs Aloysia stood motionless, then turned towards Wolfgang, drew him towards her and kissed him long and tenderly. Then she quickly vanished into her bedchamber.

They had been acquainted only a few days, and had never spoken to each other of their mutual feelings. Aloysia was reserved by nature, while Wolfgang was afraid to spoil the tender blossom of their love through a clumsy word or ill-timed action. But now he

suddenly discovered the full ardour of his feelings. The kiss still burning on his lips, he ran down the stairs and out of the house without attracting the notice of the two drinkers. For an hour, in sheer exhilaration, he strode through the snow and the night: a clear, starry sky above him, and within him the ecstatic knowledge of being in love and having his love returned.

When he came back to the inn, the lights were out. Fridolin and the host had gone to bed. He crept up the stairs and opened the door of his room. Before him, in a nightdress so thin as to be near transparency, stood Aloysia. Without a word he took her in his arms, and a chorus of angels' voices seemed to echo through his mind. '*Non so d'onde viene*', they were singing.

From then on events began to press hard upon each other. The Elector sent a huge bouquet of flowers to Töpfergasse, with a string of pearls hidden inside it. Mama Weber spread the news far and wide and with due embellishment, so that before the lovers had returned from their excursion everybody in Mannheim seemed to know that Karl Theodor's heart had once more caught fire.

Everybody, that is, except Wolfgang. The day after his return he went without any misgivings to an audience with the Elector, intending to ask for a position at court, and perhaps even a commission to write an opera. 'I am overjoyed', he began, 'that my modest talents have been appreciated by Your Highness, and I ask in deepest respect that I may be permitted to recall that Your Highness held out to me a prospect. . . .'

'Did I promise you anything?' Karl Theodor no doubt guessed what had happened in Kirchheim-Bolandcn, and he was resolved to rid himself of this unwelcome rival as quickly as he could. His voice had lost all its joviality and kindness.

'There was no p . . . promise', Wolfgang stammered. 'Your Highness was only gracious enough to hold out a prospect that I might in certain circumstances have some hope. . . .'

'Well', the Elector rejoined, 'the circumstances have not materialised, and I have not yet reached any conclusion.'

'May I submissively remind Your Highness that Your Highness found my m . . . melodies charming, and my playing remarkable.'

'You played passably well, Mozart. You will get the proper fee for your concert. Otherwise I can do nothing for you!'

'At Your Highness' service', said Wolfgang, flabbergasted but now assuming a desperate boldness. 'Your Highness might, however, have told me that before.'

'*Eh bien*, you must leave that to me!' With that the Elector turned abruptly, leaving his applicant standing in dumbfounded dismay.

Wolfgang rushed off to Töpfergasse. He could not explain to himself the change in the Elector's humour; he only knew that there was nothing more for him to do in Mannheim, that he must leave the town as quickly as possible: go away with Aloysia, to somewhere where music is appreciated, where young musicians have their chance—to Italy.

From the Webers' apartment came the sound of loud quarrelling voices. 'My daughter is not going to be the Elector's whore!' shouted Fridolin Weber, and Mama Weber yelled back: 'You'd rather she were the lovebird of a beggarly little musician?'

'I am an honest man', Weber could be heard. 'I will go before the Elector and I will tell him. . . .'

'You will shut your damned mouth', his wife shrieked at him, 'and you will do what I tell you, you bragging, blustering old good-for-nothing!'

'Gracious Heavens, Mozart, listen to her!'—he turned to Wolfgang, who had just entered—'and I have to tolerate all that, I—a man of noble lineage. I have to listen to that from a woman I pulled out of the lowest dregs of society.'

Frau Weber apparently changed her tone the moment she saw the visitor. 'Decide for yourself, young man', she demanded, addressing Wolfgang. 'In his enthusiasm for our Aloysia's art, our sovereign Elector first sends a Court Chamberlain inviting her to a supper at the Palace. An hour later a coach arrives with presents. Look there! Look!'—on the tables and chairs Wolfgang saw a heap of dresses and coats, hats, shoes, stockings, lace handkerchiefs—'and now this man here, my husband, may God forgive me—wants to forbid the child's accepting the invitation. Yes, he would even have her refuse the gifts.'

Fridolin struck his forehead with clenched fists. 'Enthusiasm for her art! Supper at the Palace! To think my own wife should be such a witless numbskull! Please, Mozart, tell this ignorant harridan what it all means.'

But Wolfgang was too bewildered to know what it all meant. He glanced round the room, and saw Aloysia, who was standing by the

window, looking pale though calm. Now she turned towards her father and said softly: 'Herr Mozart need not say anything. I know what it means, Father, and I will not go to the Palace. I have had clear warning from Mademoiselle Wendling.'

'Gustl Wendling!' cried Mama Weber. 'That painted harlot? What has she to do with it?'

'She asked me to come to see her yesterday, and when she asked if I knew the Elector's intentions, I told her I knew nothing, whereupon she began to explain things to me. "Don't heed his advances", she said, "and become the tool of treacherous court cabals, which can only bring you infinite sorrow. Help me, and you will help yourself." ' Aloysia paused briefly, then murmured, more to herself than to the others: 'And I promised her I would.'

Wolfgang approached the girl slowly, and kissed her on the forehead with great tenderness. Only now did he perceive the reasons for the sudden change in Karl Theodor's attitude, and he resolved that he would never give up the treasure which he had found in Mannheim.

'Aloysia and I love each other', he told her parents. 'We belong together for life, and as long as she stands beside me and I beside her there is no power in the world which can tear us apart.'

The old woman looked at him despairingly, screamed 'A pox on you both!', and rushed out of the room, banging the door behind her. Fridolin stretched out his hands happily, as if in a blessing. 'Children, my dear children!' was all he could say.

It was on that day Wolfgang wrote the letter to Salzburg which threw Papa—and me, too, I must own—into such consternation. It told of his love for Aloysia, of her exquisite voice, of the kind and amiable Webers; of his plan to give up looking for a court position, to send Mama home, and go on a concert tour to Italy—or perhaps Holland or Switzerland—with the girl his heart had chosen. He planned to write an opera, to take with him Aloysia's sister Josepha as a housekeeper and Fridolin as a guardian and general factotum. Perhaps, if the plan succeeded, he would bring the party to Salzburg en route so as to introduce to his dear father and sister the members of 'this poor, deserving, thoroughly honourable Christian family'.

At the bottom of the letter was a postscript from Mama: 'Wolfgang asked me to go to the post with this letter while he is having his dinner, and I am therefore adding my few lines—very few because I

do not want him to surprise me. When our boy makes new acquaintances, he will give them all he has, as he now gives it to such people. It is true that she sings beautifully, but is that enough reason for setting one's own interests entirely aside?

Ever since Wolfgang had described his first audience with Karl Theodor, Papa's hopes for his son had again soared. He saw him already as Court Kapellmeister in Mannheim and later, perhaps as Master of the Queen's Music in Paris. But with the arrival of Wolfgang's present letter, Papa's distress and anger were once more boundless. He can scarcely have closed his eyes the whole of that night, for next morning he was exceedingly weary, and could only write very slowly, so that it took him two days to reply to Wolfgang's letter.

There were ten pages to this reply, and I can remember only a few extracts which he would show me from time to time in mingled exasperation and despair.

'You know my difficult financial situation', Papa wrote, 'and all our domestic worries here. Surely the purpose of your whole journey was to seek a secure position, and to help your parents and sister. . . . It depends on you alone whether, captured by some petticoat, you live herded together in a garret, bedded on straw, with a bunch of starving children, and leave this world an unknown musician. Or whether you prefer to live a Christian life of honour, pleasure and renown, with your family provided for, and die a famous Kapellmeister of whom posterity will read. Your idea of travelling round the world with Herr Weber and two of his daughters has almost driven me distracted. Can you really wish to set aside your career and your family, and make yourself despicable in the eyes of the whole world? No! Away with you to Paris, and quickly! From Paris the name and fame of great talents can spread all over the world. Try to achieve fame there, and make money. Only then, when you have the money, may you go to Italy and write all your operas; and then you may even think of Mademoiselle Weber.'

There was much more in the same vein, and towards the end of the letter Papa took up the theme again: 'I insist on having news by return of post. For Heaven's sake leave Mannheim. Do not lose a minute. Baron Grimm promised me that he would help you in Paris. It is a stroke of luck that Grimm is in Paris. Trust him—do everything he asks you. . . .'

I do not know whether it was Papa's reasonable advice which changed Wolfgang's mind about going to Italy or whether it needed the grim tragedy that occurred in those days at Mannheim. At any rate this is what happened.

One morning the lovely Gustl Wendling was found lying dead in her bed in a side-wing of the Electoral Palace; and the ugliest rumours immediately spread. Karl Theodor had had her poisoned, his wife had shot her in a fit of jealousy, or else her father had forced his way into the Palace and threatened the Elector with a pistol, whereupon Gustl had stepped between them and been shot. The truth, however, was even more pathetic and no less horrible.

On the previous evening the Elector had come to take dinner with Gustl, during which he bluntly told her that he had no more use for her. He promised her the usual sum of money and marriage with a gentleman at court. She, it seems, was already some months pregnant; and she refused, imploring her master to be reasonable, reminding him of past happy hours, of promises—all in vain. He informed her, with cruel shamelessness, that he had decided to put Aloysia Weber in her place. After he had gone, Gustl wrote a farewell letter to her parents, asking their forgiveness for all the harm she had done them, and explaining that in her utter despair she was taking the means to end her life.

Mannheim became all at once a town of fear and tension. The populace suddenly showed its disgust at the immorality and flaunting extravagance of the prince and his sycophants. Riotous crowds gathered before the Palace, and some windows were broken. To avoid further demonstrations, it was decided to smuggle the coffin containing Gustl Wendling's body out of the Palace through a concealed side door, under cover of darkness, when it was to be buried in secret. But somehow this scheme became known, and hardly had the coffin-bearers emerged from the Palace when people appeared from every corner, many carrying torches, to follow the discarded favourite to her rest.

The Elector's situation grew increasingly perilous, and Heaven knows what might have happened in Mannheim had not news of the death of Maximilian, the Bavarian Elector, arrived at the crucial moment. For Karl Theodor it was the signal to leave Mannheim at once, set up his residence in Munich and claim his title to the Bavarian throne. And so, with the departure of the Elector and his court,

Mannheim ceased to be the centre of the arts, and also of licentious frivolity. One after the other his henchmen and satellites, likewise the adventurers and speculators with their whores and pimps in train, have drifted away from Mannheim to Munich. Now Countess Antonia hears that the Palatinate capital is sinking back into its normal drowsy serenity, out of which it was roused for a few years by the grandiose conceptions of a ruthless libertine with a true taste for music.

Gustl Wendling's tragic fate brought Wolfgang and Aloysia even closer to one another, and perhaps it was only then that they recognised the peril they had escaped. Fridolin Weber was triumphant, convinced that only his decency and honesty had saved his daughter from a fate like that of Gustl. His wife returned to her bottles of cheap liquor.

As for the two lovers, they sat up many nights trying to plan their future. Wolfgang had abandoned the idea of seeking his fortune in Italy with Aloysia, whom he advised to stay in Mannheim, and continue her musical and theatrical education. He himself would go to Paris, where he could earn money by giving music lessons to wealthy aristocrats, or perhaps, through the Queen's influence, obtain a position as Kapellmeister or composer. Then Aloysia might follow him; they would get married, and she would start her singing career in Paris as his wife. This was the plan they finally vowed to carry out.

All through these stormy March days, our dear Mama has stood behind Wolfgang without any complaint, happy when she could serve him, doing her duty as always. She laundered his shirts, pressed his ties, mended his stockings. If he came home late at night, tired and worn out, she would still be waiting for him with a hot meal and a few comforting, loving words. Yet all the time she longed to return to Salzburg, to Papa and me, to Auntie Hagenauer. And then came Papa's edict—for it was no less: 'Wolfgang must go to Paris, and you with him.'

I know only too well how she has been torn between her devotion to her son and her love for her home; but now Papa's words have decided the issue for her. It was a painful decision for him too, since he has yearned for Mama's return, yet, like the rest of us, he must subjugate his own interests to the mission God has willed—that of revealing Wolfgang's genius to the world. So with her usual ready

smile, Mama began to pack his things: the blue coat with the gold braid and silvery lace, the silken suit for the summer, the lilac one and the elegant brown one. . . .

The last letter from Mannheim arrived today. A contract with the coachman has been made whereby he will carry Mama and Wolfgang to Paris in our own yellow coach, Matilda, receiving as a fee not only eleven *louis d'or*, but in addition—Matilda herself! For fourteen years she has served us, carrying us 'through the whole of Europe, and somehow she has been a talisman, bringing us more good fortune than ill. Wolfgang feels she is now merely an encumbrance. I am quite sad at the thought that I shall never again see the old coach that was part of the family when all four of us travelled in her together.

Salzburg, end of June 1778

ARE the Mozarts in a decline? This question I have asked myself in many lonely hours. Is it really only ten or twelve years since we were a family famous throughout Europe, received by kings, spoilt by the public, and admired by all the musicians? Is my father, the shabby early-aged man with the pale unhealthy face, who hurries nervously down the street, violin under his arm, and now and then secretly requests Uncle Hagenauer for the loan of five guilders—is he the same man who once stood before princes an honoured and highly respected Kapellmeister? And my mother, once so rosy-checked, patient and good-humoured, is she the poor homesick woman, sitting alone most of the day in a gloomy attic, waiting for the moment when she can return to Salzburg?

Is my brother Wolfgang, the young Knight of the Golden Spur, now reduced to the level of a tutor, roaming from one end of Paris to the other giving piano lessons to the lazy children of indolent aristocrats, and trying desperately to make both ends meet? Am I, who stand all day before the kitchen stove, the Nannerl Mozart who was once called the greatest piano-player in Europe?

Yesterday, as if to remind us of happier times, we had a visit from

Herr Meissner, that enchanting singer of lovely songs, the gay, exuberant glutton who always has amusing yarns to recount to us. I had wanted to prepare a festive dinner with all his favourite dishes, and would have somehow scraped together the money; but he declined. He would love to come, he said, but only after dinner. 'First, to my great regret, I have a rehearsal with my accompanist, which would make me far too late for the banquet I have no doubt you were planning for me; and secondly, to my even greater regret, my stomach is no longer what it was. I am not permitted to eat a meal before my concert, and the doctor has forbidden any form of alcohol.'

Of course I sensed the real reasons: he had heard about our financial plight, and wished to spare us embarrassment. Still, he came after dinner; and, since he had sung recently in Paris among other cities, he was able to give us first-hand news of Mama and Wolfgang.

Both of them left Mannheim in March with heavy hearts, Wolfgang in despair at parting from his newly-found love. They stopped a few days in Strasbourg, through which Gluck chanced to be passing on his journey home from Paris. Wolfgang went to see him; it was the first time they had met since their days together in Vienna when Marianne was still alive. At first Gluck avoided speaking of personal matters. He talked instead about Paris, music, and—one of his commoner themes—money. 'I advise you, Wolfgang', he said, 'when you come to Paris, to think only of how to make as much money as you can, and thus achieve independence. Do not be afraid to make a nuisance of yourself by striking hard bargains. The nobility of Paris can well afford to dig into their pockets; and you will certainly need the ducats one day.'

Wolfgang felt the great composer had given him his cue, and he poured out his heart to Gluck, telling him of his love for Aloysia Weber, of her beauty, of her lovely voice, and of their mutual plans. The composer's reply stunned him. 'A musician's child, my son?' said Gluck. 'One of four daughters? The father a poor devil? Oh, Wolfgang, have you thought where all this may end? She wishes to make a career with her singing? How shall a pretty creature succeed in that without passing through the bedrooms of many powerful patrons? And, seriously, can you hope to launch yourself upon your own career with—well, with a millstone round your neck? I know

how you feel at the moment, but you must free yourself from sentimentality, and look for another girl, one with a secure and promising background, a girl . . . such as my little nightingale was. . . .’

He spoke the last words very softly, and for a few moments the two men sat in silence, each occupied with his own thoughts. Then Wolfgang got up, and thanked Gluck for his good advice. Gluck wished him the best of fortune, and they parted.

After ten days Mama and Wolfgang arrived in Paris, and it took Mama a full week to recuperate from the journey. She grieved when she saw our yellow coach driven away. ‘Matilda has brought us luck’, she said. ‘We have had her for fifteen years, and perhaps we should not have let the good old thing go.’ But Wolfgang comforted her. ‘You will get another’, he told her, ‘a thousand times more beautiful: one with a golden body, red cushions, and drawn by two white horses, with two coachmen in livery up on the box seat.’ Mama, it seems, was not much consoled.

‘Well’, Herr Meissner continued, ‘two or three days later I appeared, and I may say that your dear Mama began to smile again. After I sang a few of her favourite Salzburg *Lieder* for her, she cooked ham with mountains of noodles for me. Just think of it, Mozart, noodles and ham in Paris!’ He had forgotten about his delicate stomach.

We laughed at his enthusiasm, but as he went on a grave note crept into his voice: ‘Yes, my friends, for one evening everything was well. But let me tell you, Mozart, your wife is ill, and home-sickness makes her heart heavy. She has no resistance, and I fear, to be plain with you, that the old tree transplanted will never blossom again.’

Papa interrupted him hastily, as if unwilling to hear more of a subject which had been tormenting him for a long time. ‘And how did you find my son?’ he questioned.

‘Your son too has known a difficult time, and Paris is not these days a comfortable place to live in.’

‘What do you mean, Meissner?’ asked Papa.

‘I mean that the extremes of wealth and poverty there seem to me to bode ill for the body politic of France. The country is ruled, it is said, by the court, the aristocracy, and a hundred rich bankers. They do nothing to ease the misery of the people, who are being incited towards revolution by agitators. The circumstances are therefore little propitious for a young musician. And as if that were not

enough, there is, of all absurdities, the so-called War of the Opera! 'War of the Opera?'

'Yes', said Herr Meissner, 'this is the latest sensation which critics and newspaper writers have set in motion. A battle has been arranged between the two most successful opera composers of our time, Gluck and Piccinni. Gluck believes in making opera a vehicle for powerful and intelligent drama, while his Italian rival provides nothing but rich sensual melody. The Queen and her court are Gluckists, while the leader of the Piccinnists is Baron Grimm. I grant you that such craziness is only to be expected of a city like Paris, but nevertheless. . . .'

'And may I ask, my dear Meissner', Papa broke in, 'what all this has to do with my son?'

'Ah, Mozart!'—our mountainous friend lifted his right hand and extended his forefinger impressively in the air—'Paris is a city in which there is no middle road. You have to take up a position for or against; you are obliged to be a Gluckist or a Piccinnist, either a man of the head or a man of the heart, a dramatist or a melodist.'

'Even if you are merely a young man of twenty-five?' I enquired. 'And have just arrived in Paris hoping to start a career?'

'Even more so in such a case, young lady. I told your brother that he must make a deliberate choice and hurl himself into the midst of the fray. He declared to me that he fully believed in Gluck's demands for more intelligent drama in opera, but also recognised the need for great melody, perhaps greater than might occur to Signor Piccinni. So the alternatives were quite unreal, and his place must necessarily be in the middle. I warned him again that if he wished to write an opera, he must have either the help of the Queen and her court, or that of Grimm and his set.'

Of his experiences with both these high powers Wolfgang had given Herr Meissner a detailed account. Soon after his arrival in Paris, he had gone to Versailles full of the most sanguine hopes, to present himself to the Queen: hoping to remind her of the days when they had played together in the Palace of Schönbrunn, and to entreat her to become his patroness. He stood in a row of applicants, and when his name was called, he stepped forward, bowed deeply, but, despite his imploring looks, Marie Antoinette gave no sign of recognising or remembering him. So, making a further bow, he placed his application in the hands of some Court Chamberlain, and retired. He

heard nothing more from the Queen, but some weeks later he was offered a very minor post as assistant organist at Versailles, without any prospects of advancement, and he scornfully refused it.

With Grimm it was little better, despite the Baron's promise to Papa. Had Wolfgang declared himself an ardent Piccinnist, he might have had a chance; but as it was, the Baron saw him merely as one of the many esurient provincial musicians who came to the capital to seek their fortune, and, if they failed, would cling to the purse-strings of the aristocracy. Despite the earnest endeavours of Madame d'Épinay, who has always showed Wolfgang great kindness, Grimm was disinclined to do much for him. To be fid of him, however, the Baron gave him a few letters of introduction, so Wolfgang set about scraping a living by means of lessons and private recitals.

He waited in unheated ante-rooms, to be ushered at length into salons where uninterested ladies and gentlemen continued their game of cards while he was graciously permitted to play two or three pieces. So he continued to tramp round Paris, visiting old acquaintances, listening to empty compliments, and giving piano lessons for a few *louis d'or*.

'When I saw him', said Herr Meissner, 'I am afraid he was very near to despair; he spoke to me of getting away from a city where people had no ears for listening to music and no heart to understand its beauty. I encouraged him as best I could, and advised him not to give up hopes of Paris yet. I told him, "You may soon be a great deal happier, and more at peace with yourself." And what do you think he answered? "The greatest happiness and the deepest peace will only be mine, Herr Meissner, when I can once more see and embrace the woman I love. I do not ask for more."'

Papa brooded over Wolfgang's declaration of love for Aloysia; suddenly he burst out:

'The greatest happiness, deepest peace—oh, the stupid boy! How blind one can grow through flattery and sport with women! I have always set all my hopes on Wolfgang. I was more than his father; I was his most loyal friend. As a boy he never went to bed without kissing the tip of my nose, and telling me that when he grew up he would always honour and revere me.' Papa smiled bitterly. 'And now everything is lost. Now a girl stands between him and his family, and she has become his greatest happiness and his deepest peace.'

He looked despairingly at the floor and shook his head. We were

all three silent, and then Meissner began to speak again. 'Listen, friend Mozart', he said quietly, 'do not give up hope yet. Perhaps I know more than Wolfgang, and perhaps your son is not quite as lost as you fear.'

We listened attentively. 'Well, to cut short a lengthy story: on my journey back, I learnt in Mannheim that Karl Theodor, the new Elector of Bavaria, has invited Mademoiselle Aloysia Weber to come to the Munich Opera, where she will receive a thousand guilders a year, with six hundred guilders pension for her father besides. A tempting little salary for a comparative novice, don't you agree?'

'Witt, a fair sum to silence the father', Papa added contemptuously.

'But Aloysia', I interrupted, blurting out more than I intended: 'she promised Wolfgang to wait for him, and become his wife. She will never accept that offer.'

'I venture to think, Nannerl', answered Herr Meissner, 'that old Mama Weber will take good care of that. She knows what she wants, and she is resolved to make a second Pompadour out of Aloysia.'

'Or a second Gustl Wendling', I said sadly, thinking of the chagrin and misery in store for my dear brother.

Salzburg, 13th July 1778

IT began in the early morning when we received Wolfgang's letter, the first for some time, dated 3rd July:

'Mon très cher père,

I have very unpleasant and melancholy news to communicate to you. My dear mother is desperately ill. At the beginning of her illness she was bled, and this seemed to relieve her. But in a few days she began to complain of sudden chills and heats, which were accompanied by headaches and diarrhoea. Her condition grew steadily worse; she spoke with difficulty, and became extremely deaf. She is still very weak, also feverish and delirious. Baron Grimm sent his physician. They want to give me hope, but I have not much. For days and nights together I have been between hope and fear, but I have now resigned myself to the will of God, and I hope that you and my dear sister will do the like. I know that God, however mysteriously

He may proceed to human eyes, ordains everything for the best; and I am not easily persuaded out of the belief that neither physician nor any other man, neither misfortune nor accident, can take or give life; but only God. I do not say that my mother must die, or that we have lost all hope. She may recover if it be God's will. I find consolation in these reflections, after praying to God as earnestly as I am able for my dear mother's health and life. Let us hope, if not greatly, and put our trust in God, consoling ourselves with the reflection that everything is well ordered which the Almighty ordains, and that He knows what is essential to our temporal happiness, and our eternal salvation. . . .'

Soon after we had absorbed the contents of these lines, the Abbé Bullinger arrived, plainly very much upset. We gave him the letter to read, and with tears coursing down his cheeks, he paced up and down the room, while Papa dropped back on to his chair, thrusting his head between his hands. An oppressive silence fell upon all three of us, upon the house, and as it seemed to me upon the whole of Salzburg.

Finally the Abbé stopped his pacing, and addressed Papa in a slow deliberate voice: 'I have very bad news for you and your daughter, my dear friend. With that letter, Wolfgang was doing his best to prepare you for a heavy blow. When he wrote it, your beloved wife and Nannerl's mother had already been dead for three hours.'

Papa gave a start and looked up at the Abbé with wide horrified eyes. Then he uttered a cry of grief, rose from his chair, and went over to the window, where he leant his head against the glass and began to weep. I was seized by convulsive shivering; my knees trembled, the blood raced to my head, and I had to grasp the table so as not to fall. I heard the Abbé's voice as if from a great distance:

'Give yourselves unto God's will, my dear ones. He gave her to you, and now He has taken her from you. Wolfgang wrote to me also on this the saddest day of his life, asking me to bring you the news because he had not the heart to surprise you with it; and the letter he wrote to you was to prepare you gently for the worst.'

'Did she suffer much?' I asked.

'No, Nannerl, God be praised. Wolfgang writes:'—he pulled a letter out of his pocket—"In her extremity I prayed God for but two things! first a happy death for my mother, and for myself strength and courage; and the good Lord heard me, and bestowed these two

blessings on me in full and overflowing measure.”” The Abbé looked again at Wolfgang’s letter. ‘No, Nannerl, my dear, your mother had confessed, received the Sacrament and extreme unction three days before she died, and in those three days she was scarcely conscious at all. But in her last moments she recognised her son. “The golden coach, Wolferl”, she called out, “here it comes, just as you promised! With red cushions, white horses, and coachmen in livery on the box-seat . . . Wolferl . . .” Wolfgang held her hand, but she could no longer see or hear him. At ten o’clock that night she died.’

The Abbé put Wolfgang’s letter back in his pocket, and again the room was very still, except for Papa’s soft sobbing. Quietly, the Abbé consoled us. ‘Weep, dear friends, weep; but remember always that the Almighty willed it so, and we must thank Him that she died peacefully, as we must all wish to die. Mind now, Anna Maria Mozart is not lost to us for ever; we shall see her again, happier than she was on this earth. God’s will has been accomplished; let us pray for her soul.’

He said a prayer, and Papa dried his eyes. Then we said ‘Our Father . . .’ together, and sat for a while in silence. Soon the Abbé began to talk to us of every-day things (I could see, of course, that he was trying to distract us from our grief). We agreed with the Abbé that Wolfgang ought not to stay in Paris, and that everything must be done to bring him back to Salzburg. Papa must go to the Archbishop, ask him to forget all that had happened, and graciously consider Wolfgang as Court Organist, to replace the worthy Herr Adlgasser who had recently died.

Colloredo received my father in a dignified but not unfriendly manner, expressing his sympathy for the great loss we had suffered. ‘I never met your wife, Mozart’, he said, ‘but the general mourning which her death has called forth in our town shows that she was indeed a good Christian soul. May God comfort you, Mozart, and your family.’

Papa was slightly embarrassed, not having expected condolences from the Archbishop, and when he had thanked him, he put forward his petition concerning his son. Colloredo listened attentively, reflected for some minutes, then spoke quietly, without any of the ill-humoured brusqueness to which we have become accustomed.

‘Your son’, he told Papa, ‘has been a disappointment to me, I fear,

as a man, a servant of this court—and even as a musician. From the first I tried to help him, because I recognised the greatness of his talent. I tried for a long time, Mozart, but your son has an inner arrogance which I could not subdue, although for his true development it needed to be subdued. You will recall, eh, that last year it was both your desire and his that he should leave Salzburg; but I own that in any case my patience with him would not have lasted much longer. He has too good an opinion of himself and is too self-willed to afford any hope of improvement.’

‘In the meantime’, Papa ventured to put in, ‘my son has passed through a hard school, Your Eminence. He has suffered bitter disappointments. People he trusted have betrayed him; he has knocked on doors which have been slammed in his face. He has gone hungry, and has been chastened by the experience of sitting by his mother’s deathbed. You will find him now a changed man.’

Colloredo looked for a moment at the busts of Rousseau and Voltaire standing on his desk. ‘You’re very naïve, eh, Mozart’, he replied, his voice already a little harsher. ‘The philosophers teach us that our qualities never develop into their contraries but always into their own extremes. Thus wise people become even wiser with age, stupid people more and more stupid, noble people nobler; yes, Mozart, and arrogant people even more arrogant, eh! You will not take it amiss then if I refuse to take your son back to my court. Consider it honestly, and I trust you will appreciate the weighty reasons for my decision.’

Papa withdrew in despair, and throughout the day he has not ceased deploring the loss of all he held dear: the beloved companion of his life, the hope of making something of his son’s God-given genius, his financial independence and the respect of his fellow-men. All that remains is a devoted daughter keeping house for him. He spares my feelings by not speaking of me, but I know how much of a disappointment I must be to him: twenty-seven and still quite pretty, so people say; but with no prospects of marriage, while all my friends are mothers. My heart is empty. I toil away in the house and at my tedious piano lessons, an aging ‘old maid’—that is what they call women like me—who can give little joy to her father in his lonely house, who is glad enough if people leave her to her own melancholy thoughts.

Salzburg, 16th January 1779

YESTERDAY, some fifteen months after he went on his travels to conquer the world, Wolfgang returned home, disheartened and defeated. I found his appearance distressing. Even allowing for the effect of his journey, he looked unkempt; he is too thin, with narrow shoulders and an unpleasantly sallow complexion; and all his features—the over-large nose, the deep-set eyes and protruding lower lip—seem accentuated, giving a total impression of a not very healthy person far older than his twenty-three years. Only his small feminine hands, with their long sensitive fingers, lend him a mark of distinction. It may take weeks, perhaps months, before our loving care can restore the old high-spirited Wolfgang.

He was not alone when he came back to us, and perhaps therein lies hope of his cure. When he stepped out of the mail-coach, we saw standing next to him a plump, good-looking, not very elegant girl of about his own age—whom he introduced as our cousin Thekla. ‘God greet you, dear uncle’, said Wolfgang’s ‘Bäsele’, curtsying to Papa. She then embraced me with great heartiness. ‘I have heard so much about you, Nannerl!’, she remarked; and I wondered if she knew how much I had heard about her. She picked up her portmanteau, and walked away on Papa’s arm, while Wolfgang took my arm and followed her, giving no immediate explanation for the presence of our guest.

When we got home, Bimpy barked ecstatically, and threw herself at Wolfgang. Teresa and I had prepared a special home-coming supper, at which the atmosphere was much more cheerful than I had dared hope. Wolfgang was somewhat reserved with us at first; he seemed nervous and ill at ease. But Bäsele talked a good deal, both agreeably and amusingly, and for the first time in months I saw my father smile again.

After I had retired to my room, Wolfgang came in, as I knew he would. He sat down by the bed, and with very little preamble began to pour out his heart. He has lived through a strange turbulent time with so many humiliating experiences, and I was happy in the knowledge that I was probably the only person in the world to whom he could unburden his troubled soul.

After Mama's death it was almost unbearable for him to remain in their small ill-lit room under the roof. At night he was haunted by her presence in every corner. He felt he had neglected her, and left her too much on her own; but it was after all his duty to earn a livelihood for them both; yet he might have noticed earlier that she was ailing, and have insisted on her returning to Salzburg. Tortured with such thoughts in the lonely room, unable to find surcease in sleep, he would wander aimlessly through the Paris streets for most of the night, or doze for a while in the pew of some small church, surrounded by vagrants and beggars.

One day Madame d'Épinay took pity on him, and with Grimm's grudging consent she invited him for the rest of his Paris stay to live at her (and Grimm's) house in the Chaussée d'Antin. It must have started as pity; but certainly this emotion soon gave way to something stronger and deeper. 'An eagle in a cage of gauze', as Voltaire once described her, Madame d'Épinay is, at fifty, still beautiful and gentle, with so much affection left to squander. For over twenty years she has been chained to that cold-hearted egotist, Grimm; what could be more natural than that she should fall in love with Wolfgang? As for Wolfgang, he was lonely and unhappy, and Madame d'Épinay was the only human being in Paris who had treated him with kindness. The inevitable happened: the two found each other.

Hints of this had reached Grimm, but at first he preferred to disregard them. Though he was furious, it was not from jealousy, for every spark of genuine love for Madame d'Épinay had long ago died in him. What angered him was the fact that he, Frederick Baron Grimm, renowned *littérateur* and ambassador, an Empress' lover, should be cuckolded in his own house by a beggarly provincial musician! The thought outraged his vanity, and worse still was the fear that the affair might become publicly known. Meanwhile, Papa in his letters to Grimm urged him to advise Wolfgang to leave Paris.

'I have had another letter from your father, Mozart', the Baron told Wolfgang one day. 'He would like to know what your plans are, and how long you intend staying in Paris.'

Wolfgang was ill prepared for the attack. 'I have no immediate plans for leaving Paris, Baron.'

'Do you not intend going to Mannheim?'

'What am I supposed to do in Mannheim?'

'What are you supposed to do here? I heard that you had in Mannheim certain amorous attachments, and I am surprised that they do not provide a stronger attraction. Here in Paris you can hardly achieve much.'

'I hope to receive a commission to write an opera. . . .

'If you have the desire to write an opera, sit down and write one. Why should anybody commission you, of all people?'

'And why not, pray? There are too many bunglers round here overwhelmed with commissions.'

'These bunglers, as you call them, are apparently more active than you. They work harder and are better versed in the means which lead to success.'

'I do not understand you, Baron.'

'*Sans doute*, because you are not clever enough. Had you only half as much talent and twice as much intelligence, you would not be hunting for piano pupils.'

'You think, *Monsieur le Baron* . . .'

'I think you ought to have long ago found yourself a patroness, some great lady who would be able to smooth certain paths for you.'

'Madame d'Épinay has been extremely gracious to me, and has tried . . .'

Grimm flared up. 'Madame d'Épinay!' he shouted. '*Quelle insolence!* Can you be so stupid and naïve, Mozart, or do you refuse to understand?'

After Mama's death I believed it would be best for Wolfgang to come home, and secretly I hoped, for his sake, that he might come home with Aloysia. If I could get Papa to give his consent to their marriage, then Wolfgang would be happy in Salzburg; particularly if Aloysia obtained a position at the Archbishop's court. So the first thing to do was to try to alter the Archbishop's decision, and it seemed to me that the only person who could help here was, once again, the Countess Lodron.

I am still giving lessons to her daughters, so it was easy enough to talk over the whole position with Louisa, who I knew was deeply concerned for Wolfgang's happiness, even though she had long given up hope of meaning more to him than the wistful memory of an early romance. As I dared to hope, Louisa promised to ask her mother to intercede with the Archbishop and implore him to offer Wolfgang a

position at court so that he could return honourably to Salzburg.

The Countess was still very skilful in touching Colloredo's heart, and I was not altogether surprised when he summoned Papa to another audience. But Papa was truly astonished when the Archbishop announced that he had changed his mind, and now could offer Wolfgang the post of Court Organist under certain conditions concerning the amount of his leave.

Papa, delighted, but quite unaware as to what had caused the change in Colloredo's attitude, immediately wrote to Wolfgang, vehemently urging him to return home with all despatch. On the Holy Day of Epiphany, just ten days ago, the decree arrived appointing my brother Court Concert Director and Cathedral Organist; although the arrangements had in fact been settled some time earlier.

A week or two ago Louisa Lodron left Salzburg for Prague to marry Count Martinitz, a rich Bohemian land-owner, whom her mother long ago had chosen for her. I did not immediately connect Wolfgang's appointment with Louise's imminent departure. But soon I discovered that the Countess had only agreed to intercede with the Archbishop on condition that Louisa left Salzburg before Wolfgang came home. And it was out of her undemanding love for my brother that the girl had agreed to her mother's stern condition.

I saw Louisa a few hours before she went, and thanked her. She did not look sad. She smiled her sweet proud smile, embraced me, and said: 'We shall see each other again, Nannerl, and . . . I hope I did right.' During the past few days I have been haunted by the thought of this serene, beautiful, warm-hearted girl, travelling in her private coach to Prague; and I too hope most fervently that she did right—right for all of us.

But let me return to events when Wolfgang was still in Paris. As soon as the prospect of a post in Salzburg seemed sufficiently hopeful, I began to persuade Papa concerning Aloysia; perhaps, I thought, she could still be saved from the clutches of Karl Theodor. My whole plan was based on the prospective move of the Webers to Munich, about which Papa and I had been told by Herr Meissner. Wolfgang learnt of this eventually from Aloysia herself.

She wrote to him that although it was not finally decided, she was afraid she would have to go because the family's plight in Mannheim was so distressing. Her mother had nagged her to accept the offer,

while even old Fridolin had been tempted by the money. But she vowed she would not become entangled with court intrigues; she still loved Wolfgang, and was praying for the time when they could be reunited.

The endearing terms of the letter allayed Wolfgang's fears about Munich, or it may have been that he was too absorbed in his own brightening prospects in Paris. True, he had not yet received his hoped-for commission to write an opera, but he had a distinct feeling that some of his music was beginning to win acclamation.

And on one day, to his joyful surprise, came a visit from Christian Bach, that best of friends from our childhood days in London, who was in Paris to write a French opera, and to choose singers for the main parts.

He had one sad piece of news for Wolfgang: Tom Linley, the boy violinist with whom my brother had vowed undying friendship in Florence eight years earlier, had been drowned on a boating excursion near Grimthorpe. Apart from this, however, it was wonderful for my brother to hear about England.

The meeting with Bach put new heart into Wolfgang, and indeed encouraged him to stay longer in Paris, despite Papa's written eulogies about the attractions of Salzburg and the excellence of the Archbishop's terms. 'Everyone is eager to see you here again', Papa wrote, and he even threw out hints that he was not ill-disposed to Wolfgang's association with Aloysia, and that her talents might show to advantage in Salzburg.

Unfortunately for my plans, Christian Bach was pleading with Wolfgang not to bury his ambitions in Salzburg. 'Paris can still yield the coveted laurels, my dear Wolfgang', he counselled, 'and you may in the end be in a position to offer your Aloysia further opportunities here. Write your opera first, and then we shall see.'

'But I am always being told', replied Wolfgang gloomily, 'that I need a patron and must take sides in their wretched quarrels; which I refuse to do.'

'I have also refused, Wolfgang, and I fear it may be a mistake; but your case is different. You, I think, might stretch your conscience a little, and, whether you adhere to Gluck and company or to Piccinni and company, any opera you write will contain something of Mozart which will be unique and beyond disputation for true judges of

music. Paris is still the city where great careers can be made for musicians, and yours, Wolfgang, should certainly be one of them.'

'Well then, Christian', my brother asked him, 'why do you not remain here? Why do you waste your talent in arranging court concerts in London and giving music lessons to the young princes and nobility?'

Christian reflected for a moment, and then replied very seriously: 'My talent, Wolfgang? Long ago I recognised the limitations of that, and I have tried to arrange my life within these limits as pleasantly as possible. I am no Gluck, nor a Mozart either. My daily bread is secured by the three hundred guineas I get every year at the Court; and the butter and preserves to cover that bread come from the few wealthy pupils you refer to. I have surrendered to my fate without complaint, but for you, I repeat, it is different.'

'You believe that, Christian?'

'Of course I do. You are young, and you must not give in too readily. Fourteen years ago, when I saw you for the first time at St James' Palace, you were a precocious, unformed, talented child. We studied together, and when you left England, you had begun to understand music. Later on, you were able to sit at Father Martini's feet. He had faith in your musical genius, and none should know better than he. Is all that to have been in vain? You went out into the world with fine hopes, and now they are beginning to come to fruition; it would be sad to see them wither in the cramping atmosphere of Salzburg.'

'But I could do much for Salzburg's music, Christian', protested Wolfgang. 'I have many ideas about that. And besides, I am longing to see my father and sister again.'

'The second point I can understand, but you owe it to yourself to achieve something worthy of your genius before you return. And as for Salzburg's music, from what you have told me of your Archbishop, I fear he will allow you little latitude. No, if Paris finally disappoints you, perhaps there might be work for you in England—I would use such influence as I possess. I think you would be happy there.'

It was soon after this conversation that Christian returned to London, and, as far as Wolfgang knows, the opera he intended to write remained unwritten: he would not take sides, so he too fell a casualty in the War of the Opera.

The memory of Christian excited Wolfgang as he retold the story. He had been sitting sedately at my bedside, but now he jumped up, crying: 'It would be wonderful, Nannerl, to visit England again.'

'Well', I said, 'did you write to Christian? Did you ask him to help you?'

'I had no time. Events moved too swiftly for me.'

'Grimm hustled you out of Paris?'

'Yes, only it was far worse than I told Papa in my letters. The trouble was . . .'

'Madame d'Épinay?'

'Yes, Nannerl, Madame d'Épinay. Grimm must have been watching us, and one day . . .'

'Well?'

'He caught us. That was too much for him. He was forced to act.'

He acted, it seemed, with vigour and effectiveness. He threw my brother out of his house, with dire threats of what would happen if Wolfgang did not immediately leave Paris. To speed his departure, Grimm bought him a ticket on a coach for Strasbourg, and Wolfgang was not even allowed time to collect fees for some of his lessons, or to await the decision on a symphony he had submitted to the Directors of the *Concerts Spirituels*.

In his 'Snail Coach'—rightly named, for it took ten days between Paris and Strasbourg—Wolfgang had ample time for reflection. Except for the few days with Christian Bach, his six months in Paris had been a disastrous time for him: Mama's death, Grimm's hatred, the melancholy experience with Madame d'Épinay, repeated disappointments as a musician, the sad news about Tom Linley. . . . But all this, he hoped, would be wiped out when he saw Aloysia again. Only . . . would he find her at Mannheim?

A letter from Papa which he received at Strasbourg told him that the Webers had arrived in Munich. So from now on all his thoughts were directed towards going there. But he could not do so at once for a very good reason—he was short of money. He refused to meet the Webers again in a state of miserable poverty, especially now that they would be in more affluent circumstances. There was only one thing to do, and that was to earn money on the way. Wolfgang therefore stayed two or three weeks at Strasbourg, and gave several recitals with great artistic but unfortunately not much financial success.

He decided that his next stop should be at Mannheim. He had several good friends there who would arrange concerts for him and procure him piano pupils.

He paid little heed to Papa's importunate demands that he should waste no further time in Mannheim but hasten home. Instead, he talked of an appointment he hoped to get in that city—which Papa and I quite failed to understand. There were we, longing for his return, with the Archbishop preparing to offer him a livelihood on satisfactory terms; and there was he, dallying in Mannheim to no apparent purpose whatever.

'It must have been highly annoying for you, little sister of my heart', Wolfgang owned, 'but what else could I do? Besides, it was while I was at Mannheim that I began to feel great anxiety over Aloysia. I feared that the old woman had been too strong for her, that I had left it too late and that Aloysia had forgotten Kirchheim-Bolanden. When I left Mannheim, I wanted a little time to think. So I stopped and spent a few days at Kaiserheim, where I also gave a concert. A chance encounter at an inn there gave me a sudden idea, which I now see was not such a wise one, and may end in hurting someone I am really fond of.'

I knew what he meant. 'Bäse?' I asked; he nodded.

At the inn, Wolfgang met a stoutish young priest, who introduced himself as Thomas Reibald, and who was also on his way to Munich, for its famous carnival. He was later going to Augsburg, where he had been appointed a canon.

'Augsburg!' exclaimed Wolfgang.

'You know that God-forsaken spot, Herr Mozart?'

'I know it slightly. My father comes from Augsburg, and I have an uncle and aunt living there.'

'I would sooner have gone to Strasbourg or Munich', the newly-appointed canon confessed, 'but my Bishop knows no bargaining. "To Augsburg as prebendary, or else it's a village parish for you", was all he had to say, and well, the lesser of two evils, you know—I chose Augsburg. You know the place, do you? Good, good. I hear there are some quite comely womenfolk there, eh? And buxom, too, as I like them.'

Wolfgang smiled, thinking of Bäse, and Reibald, having ordered

more beer for them both, continued: 'But of course I have to indemnify myself, just in case—just in case, Herr Mozart, the Augsburg women are not quite as comely as I could wish, or else are too exceedingly chaste and have too much respect for their prebendary. So I decided to go to Munich first and find a shapely lass with whom I can fling myself into the carnival, so that I may the better repent in Augsburg later on.'

'You have little to repent so far, I take it?' asked Wolfgang with a sly grin.

'Oh, plenty, I assure you, plenty.' Reibald returned the grin with an engagingly frank smile, and at once launched into amusing if rather coarse accounts of various experiences 'worthy of repentance' which he had so far had. The evening passed quickly for Wolfgang in the company of this amiable rogue in priest's garb, and on their parting Reibald insisted that when he arrived in Munich early in the New Year, they must certainly meet again.

Then the idea suddenly flashed into Wolfgang's head: why not ask Bäsle to come to Munich? 'I felt, Nannerl', he said haltingly, 'that if Aloysia were lost to me, I should really need Bäsle. So I wrote to her that I should like her to come as soon as possible, and that she might still play an important part for me. I was determined to have it out with Aloysia, and somehow it gave me a great sense of security to think that my gay, undemanding Bäsle would soon be in Munich.'

She arrived on New Year's Eve, and Wolfgang at once realised that his invitation had been a mistake. Bäsle may have meant what she said in Augsburg about parting from him without regrets; but her feelings had changed in the past year, and she had discovered that this young cousin stood nearer to her heart than anyone else.

'And now, Nannerl', said Wolfgang with an uneasy smile, taking my hand and caressing it, 'we have come to Salzburg together—and. . .'

I laughed. 'And old Nannerl is once more to help her little brother out of the pickle he has got himself into.'

Wolfgang kissed me on the cheek. 'It would be kind of her', he murmured in tones of relieved gratitude, 'very kind of her.'

When Wolfgang arrived in Munich it was Christmas, and the streets were white with the snow which had fallen the night before, and which was now gleaming under a brilliant sun. For a little while

he watched a group of children hurling snowballs at one another, then bent down, formed his own snowball, and flung it into their midst. They turned, laughing, and made a gesture as if to return fire; but he was already striding on, his heart full of joy, singing to himself — '*Non so d'onde viene*'.

The Webers lived in a small villa near the River Isar, on the outskirts of the town; it was plain that they had risen in the world. Wolfgang walked through the little front garden, and entered the house. A door opened, and Fridolin stood before him; he looked embarrassed and surprised. The old man seized his hand. '*Mozart, my dear friend!*' he exclaimed. '*God greet you in M^unich!*'—and he turned towards the room, calling out: '*A visitor, wife, a welcome friend from Mannheim days!*'

Wolfgang walked in, and the picture he saw was not greatly different from that he had seen in Mannheim's Töpfergasse. The furniture had changed for the better, but the family remained the same. Mama Weber sat at a table, with the inevitable bottle in front of her; Josepha reclined on a couch, combing her hair; and Constanze and Sophie were also there. But from the next room came a glorious stream of sweet melody, accompanied by soft, long chords on the piano. Wolfgang listened, rapt once more, to Aloysia's voice.

The old Weber woman looked at him long and searchingly from her small, drunken, and yet somehow wide-awake eyes. Then she gave her husband and three daughters a sign to leave the room. Fridolin tried to say something, but she cut him short with an impatient gesture. As Wolfgang watched the wretched old man walk away with shoulders bowed, all his joyfulness and serenity left him. The singing had stopped.

'Fool!' the woman called after her husband in a hoarse, slightly slurred voice, and then began to laugh bitterly. '*A welcome friend!*' she belched. '*You certainly could not be less welcome, young man! Not to me, and not to the girl. What is it you want here? To go on playing around with her, rolling in the beds of little village inns, and not even pay for your sport? You'd be a fine suitor, I declare. Hands off the wench, I say, and out you go, out of the playground of our gracious Prince Elector.*'

She got up, walked towards Wolfgang and tried to push him out of the room. Till then my brother had watched her in silence, wondering how to extricate himself from this horrible situation. Now he

hurled her back to her chair, went to the door of the next room, opened it fiercely, and shouted: 'Aloysia!'

Silently, her head held high, her hard, sad eyes directed straight at him, the girl entered the room. Wolfgang retreated a step or two before her, taken aback by her haughty attitude: 'I want to know the truth, Aloysia', he said, 'the truth!'

There was a deathly silence, and then the girl began to speak, slowly and deliberately, as if she had rehearsed and studied what she would say but was still weighing every word: 'It was not my intention to lie to you, Herr Mozart. Our paths, which once fleetingly crossed, have now separated for good. If the hours we spent together meant more to you than they did to me, I must ask your forgiveness. On the particular road which I intend to travel, it would be vain and senseless to saddle myself with useless burdens. I regret that you permitted yourself certain hopes which must remain unfulfilled. *Adieu*, Herr Mozart!'

With that she turned and left the room. Wolfgang was beside himself with anger. 'Fleetingly crossed!' he shouted, almost dementedly, banging his palms against his brow. 'Hours we spent together; useless burdens! Oh God, oh God! Is there so much malice in the world, so much filth and baseness and treachery!'

Fridolin, who had returned, took a step towards him. 'Please calm yourself, friend', he said, 'try to understand. . . .'

'Shut your damned mouth, idiot', the old woman broke in, 'and throw him out.' Fridolin attempted to silence her, but Wolfgang cried in fury: 'Let her speak, you poor old man. She at least is honest. She says what she thinks without hypocrisy. I would emulate the lady of the house, my kindly friends, and I too wish to say what I think, straight from the heart.' He paused, then walked to the door, and just before slamming it behind him, called out in a savage, scathing voice: 'You can all kiss my arse.'

THE assignment Wolfgang had given me concerning Bäsle proved easier than I had expected, and she seemed to have guessed what I had in mind almost before I began to speak. I meant to lead up to the subject casually, with tactful generalisations about the nature of artists, the thorny path they are obliged to tread, their need for independence; and then to Wolfgang, to the glorious future that might be his, in spite of his present relative disadvantages.

But there was no need for diplomacy. 'I know what you are trying to tell me', said Bäsle, and though her eyes smiled I could hear a great sadness in her voice. 'You would break it to me gently that there is no hope between me and the boy, that I am not good enough for him. . . .'

'Bäsle!' I protested, but she cut me short. 'And you are right, a thousand times right. I have known it myself all the time. Every day after he left Augsburg, my heart ached because I had learnt how very fond of him I was. But then came the letter from Kaiserheim, and suddenly everything seemed so different. The story had not come to an end after all, I said to myself, and was overjoyed. Silly of me, I know, Nannerl. Persuading myself that a commonplace girl like me, a poor relation, could ever become wife to my Chevalier cousin who everybody tells me has true genius—in an art I do not even understand. No, I can see now it would not be a good match . . .'

'It is not that, Bäsle', I interrupted. 'Only, please let me try to explain it all to you. I truly believe that God has given a special mission to certain people, of whom you are one, to help my brother on his road in a particular way which nobody else could do. But in my heart I am convinced that it is not your mission to accompany him through life as his wife and the mother of his children.' ('And may he never find a worse one!' I prayed as I said this.)

She looked at me very earnestly, and as if she understood. 'But instead?' was all she said.

I thought for a moment. 'But instead', I answered, 'to make him laugh, to lift him out of the melancholy in which grievous circumstances have plunged him, to draw him back to his piano and his

writing desk, to restore his gaiety; and then, when you feel such objects have been sufficiently achieved, to vanish quietly out of his life. If you have the courage to do this, your mission from God towards Wolfgang Mozart, a sad but noble mission, will have been fulfilled.'

The following weeks were indeed the gayest we had experienced at Hannibal Square for a long time. Wolfgang's appointment at court had again brought some money into the house, and Bäsle, showing herself more domestically inclined than I had expected, joined Teresa and me in the kitchen, where we baked and cooked with gusto to the delight of our menfolk. Papa and Wolfgang have had their favourite dishes every day, and after an interval of many months we were once more able to offer true hospitality, almost as good as when Mama was alive, though it could never be quite as good.

On the eve of Bäsle's departure we had a special party for her, which was also to celebrate Wolfgang's homecoming with our oldest and best Salzburg friends. Bäsle seemed in the highest of spirits, and kept Sally Joly in violent fits of mirth—so much so that Sally still giggled intermittently while Andreas Schachtner was reciting a rather solemn poem he had composed in honour of Wolfgang's return. The effect of the poem was somewhat marred, and Sally earned well-merited scowls from Schachtner.

Ursula Haffner came in for a while with Siegmund her husband, and of course her parents were there too: for the old Hagenauers had greeted Wolfgang almost as if he were their own son, and they made much of our cousin from Augsburg. Their son was not with us—I missed him particularly—but Father Dominicus' order is a severe one, and even his family see little of him these days. The Abbé Bullinger professed himself 'devilish happy to be partaking of such excellent fatted calf, you know, on such an occasion'; and the little speech he made during supper amused and moved us very much.

Then, very late in the evening, Michael Haydn arrived, to be heartily welcomed although he was mildly intoxicated (less mildly as the night went on). He brought along his accustomed boon companions, Lipp and Spitzeder. We drank and sang and laughed and made music till six in the morning, when it was time for those of us

who were still up (Bullinger and the Hagenauers had departed a long while before) to escort Bäsle to the mail-coach for Munich.

All the way there, much to the horror of a neighbourhood roused from its proper slumbers, Wolfgang conducted a farewell canon, in which he, Schachtner, Haydn, Lipp, Sally (who can scarcely sing a note in tune) and Papa all joined.

Then Bäsle received many parting embraces and kisses amidst continued song and merriment; but the kiss she received from Wolfgang, who was rather tipsy, was so light and indifferent that my heart bled for the girl.

'My undying thanks, Bäsle', I whispered to her, unnoticed by the singers, as she stepped into the coach. 'Look after him well, Nannerl', she returned. After this she gave us all an impish smile which I alone knew was masking her unwept tears. Then she took out her handkerchief to wave, and made a sign to the coachman to drive on.

Since Teresa is perfectly well able to prepare supper without my help, it has become a habit with me during these last months to go out at the hour of sunset (while Wolfgang usually has to play the organ in the Cathedral and Papa is giving violin lessons) and refresh myself with a short solitary walk up to the Mönchsberg.

It was very hot today, but at about six, when I started my walk, a gentle evening breeze began to temper the sultriness of the atmosphere. The mountains lay ahead of and above me, looking close enough to grasp with one's hands. Down below ran the Salzach, shimmering in jade green. The higher I climbed, the smaller became the churches and houses beneath me, and the more freely I could breathe. A mild westerly wind blew through my hair, and as always I took a slight rest at the top of one of the smaller slopes, breathing in the strong, cool air and enjoying the glorious vista stretching below. I had not noticed that someone else had stopped too, just behind me, but when I chanced to turn round, I saw a tall, slim, heavily veiled woman standing there. I remembered having noticed her on the outskirts of the town, and again later on, at a turning in the path up the hill; so she must have been following me.

'Yes, Mademoiselle Mozart', she said, in a soft melodious voice, as if guessing my thoughts, 'yes, I have followed you. Because I had a burning desire to talk to you, to explain to you.' I looked at her and understood nothing. Then she took off her veil, revealing a grave,

rather melancholy face of disturbing beauty, and I at once had a presentiment who she was.

'You are. . . ?' I asked in a voice that must have conveyed my certitude.

'Yes', she nodded. 'Aloysia Weber.'

Dusk was now falling, and the landscape, which only a few minutes before had been bright with the glow of the setting sun, was shrouded in a thin veil of mist. The distress and humiliation my brother had suffered because of Aloysia flashed through my mind as I addressed the girl in my coldest tones: 'I am not aware, Mademoiselle Weber, that you have anything to tell me or explain to me.'

With that I was about to turn for home, but she seized my hand. 'So very much, Nannerl', she said, almost in tears. And she spoke my name with such feeling and sadness that I could not bring myself to leave her standing there.

'Please speak, Mademoiselle', I said; and haltingly she began to do so.

'I am with my parents and sisters—we are on our way to Vienna.'

'To Vienna?' I asked in surprise.

'To take up an engagement there in the Imperial Court Opera.'

'You have left Munich, then? But I thought. . . '

'You thought I was the Elector's mistress?' I nodded. 'I am not', she said, 'nor have I ever been.'

'And the villa on the river Isar, Mademoiselle? The thousand guilders?'

'It is true the Elector did everything for my pleasure. At first, only because he liked me well enough, and his vanity demanded that he incorporate me in his—collection. But later, when he saw that no power in the world could force me to submit to him, he declared his love.'

'His love?' I laughed harshly. 'That incorrigible, heartless old libertine?'

'No, Mademoiselle Mozart: a sobered old man perhaps facing for the first time a woman who refused him what he wanted.'

We had begun to walk slowly down the hillside, as the twilight changed to darkness. 'When I received the summons to Munich', Aloysia continued, 'I had not the slightest doubt why I was being offered all the money, why my family had been provided for, why

we were to have, besides, the discreet little house on the outskirts of the town.'

'Yet you accepted.'

'I accepted with the resolve that I would not keep the unwritten part of my contract with the Elector. I had no ambition to become a second Pompadour, nor was I afraid of becoming a second Gustl Wendling. I wanted to sing, to be admired, to cut a figure at court. I wanted to escape, as quickly as I could, from the grinding misery which surrounded me at home; but I was not willing to pay that particular price.'

'In plain language, you cheated the Elector.'

'No, I tamed him; and at the same time I pulled myself out of the squalor in which I might otherwise have been submerged. I have become hard and inflexible, ridding myself of certain feelings which are dangerous and unprofitable, which only render us discontented and unhappy . . .'

'Certain feelings? Such as. . .?'

'Such as pity, tenderness, love.'

'May I ask how old you are, Mademoiselle?'

She stopped for a moment, surprised. 'Eighteen.'

'Eighteen!' I echoed, shaking my head. 'Poor, poor Aloysia!'

As we continued down the hill I felt there was something else she wanted to say to me. 'I have a favour to ask of you, Mademoiselle', she said abruptly and earnestly. 'Promise me that Wolfgang will never learn of this talk between us, nor of my stay here in Salzburg.' I gave her my promise, and she went on: 'Whatever I said about these dangerous feelings, it is true that I still love one man, the only man I have ever loved, and I shall always love him alone, whatever happens to me or to him. Yes, Nannerl, it is your brother. Our ways had to part, because together we could never achieve what it was in us to achieve separately.'

Night had fallen before we reached the old part of the city. I noticed that Aloysia was walking in the direction of the Lodron Palace. 'The gracious Countess Lodron has invited me to spend the night in her house', she said.

'You know the Countess?'

'I had the honour to be presented to her at a court concert in Munich.'

'Oh!'

‘It was also the Countess Lodron who drew the attention of His Majesty the Emperor to my voice, and who recommended me for an engagement in the Imperial Opera.’

Now I began to understand. Antonia Lodron knows only too well of the Emperor’s desperate loneliness. When she saw and heard Aloysia for the first time in Munich, it must have occurred to her that this lovely girl might bring a new sun and warmth into the Emperor’s life; and she must at once have begun to act. But Aloysia herself—I thought hard—how much, if anything, does she know of this benevolent little intrigue, and is she prepared for her part? I decided not to pry into her secrets, which, after all, were not my concern. Instead, I asked her casually: ‘And the Elector, Mademoiselle? Did he let you go, *sans cérémonie*?’

‘The Viennese Court asked for my release through diplomatic channels, and Karl Theodor could scarcely ignore the Emperor’s wishes. Perhaps’, she added, ‘perhaps he was even happy to be rid of me’—and for the first time in our conversation I saw her smile. ‘At the farewell audience His Highness asked me if I had some special wish he might grant. For a long time I had been waiting for this moment, and it did not find me unprepared. “Your Highness”, I said, with a deep curtsy, “would truly crown your kindness to me and do a great service to your country’s art, if you would commission an opera from the most gifted young maestro of our time.”’

‘“Mozart?” he asked without surprise. I felt myself blushing, and curtsied again.

‘“You are asking a great deal of me, Mademoiselle Weber”, he said. “You ask me to help the man who has marred the great happiness of my life.” I looked firmly at him and I was not afraid. “The world, Your Highness, will be in your debt.” The Prince returned my look with a sort of rueful, quizzical kindness, and made a sign with his hand, showing both that I was dismissed and that he was disposed to grant my request.’

We had arrived in front of the Lodron Palace. Aloysia stopped and offered me her hand. ‘Thank you, Mademoiselle’, she said, ‘for listening to me.’ I had begun to express my thanks too for what she had done to fulfil Wolfgang’s dearest wish; but such words as I could utter seemed somehow incongruous, and I almost broke off in the middle of a sentence as a thought suddenly occurred to me.

‘Aloysia’, I said, ‘Fate has marked you out to do something

I have always dreamed of doing, but never had the courage to attempt: to make the Emperor's life happier. Be good to him!

She looked deep into my eyes, and answered softly: 'I promise that—to Wolfgang's sister.' Then she went inside the gate of the Lodron Palace.

Salzburg, 15th November 1779

YESTERDAY we celebrated Papa's sixtieth birthday—very quietly, for he would not let us remind anybody else about it. 'I do not like growing old', he sighed, 'and I do not wish any fuss on my birthday when my life's companion has gone.' I placed a clean white cloth on the breakfast table, with a few flowers round the plates and cups, and when Papa came into the room Wolfgang and I embraced him very fondly. Wolfgang then handed him two bottles of wine.

After breakfast Papa went to give two lessons, one in the house of Herr Reifenhahl, the apothecary, and the other to the son of Herr Zeni, the grocer. Then he visited Father Dominicus at St Peter's Abbey, bringing a few pieces of church music he had written. Luncheon was followed, as usual, by a nap; and then Bimpy was taken for a walk. The Abbé Bullinger called in the evening, and we all drank Papa's health in a glass of punch, after which the two men played piquet for a little, and my father was childishly happy to have won a few kreutzers when the Abbé departed. Yes, it was a quiet, uneventful birthday, but then the life of the Mozarts was not rich in events during these last months.

Ursula Haffner came to see me the other day, and told me that Resi Molk now had a little daughter and would very much like a visit from me. 'Won't you let bygones be bygones, Nannerl?' said Ursula. 'Forget those old troubles—wouldn't you like to see little Elizabeth?' I was silent for a few moments. The old troubles were bygone indeed; how long ago is all that, between Pepi and me, Wolfgang and Resi! 'Oh yes', I said at length, 'I *would* like to see little Elizabeth. Tell Resi I shall be delighted to come. Not today or tomorrow, Ursula. Ask her to give me a little longer. But I shall come one day.'

What else has been happening in the wider world since I last wrote? We have heard much of Chevalier Gluck's triumphs. At the age of sixty he had the courage to throw overboard everything which had made him a successful composer, and start afresh; today, at sixty-five, he stands before the world more powerful than ever before, the most famous opera composer of our time. As for Joseph Haydn, who will soon be fifty, he has made an eighteen-year-old Italian singer, Luigia Polzelli, his mistress; and what a dance she leads him down in Esterhaz! 'Hasn't enough with one bitch at home', comments his brother Michael, 'but he must needs add a second one.'

A letter received from Bäsle some time ago caused Wolfgang much amusement. 'Just fancy!' she wrote. 'I was so miserable taking leave of you all after the fun I had at Salzburg, and then what do you think happened when the coach reached Munich? A very elegant young priest, plainly from the aristocracy, stepped into the coach, and it turned out that he too was travelling to Augsburg. He enquired where I had come from, and when I told him, he asked whether I knew a young musician in Salzburg by the name of Mozart. To which I replied proudly: "I am a Mozart myself, and I think you must be referring to my cousin Wolfgang." He knows Wolfgang well, it appears, and has asked me to send his regards. His name is Reibald, and he has taken up a post as a canon in our town; he does not consider it beneath his dignity to honour our modest house with periodical visits.'

'Just fancy indeed!' Wolfgang shouted joyfully. 'A devilish fine match they'd make! How wonderful that these two have found each other, our jolly, chubby, Bäsle and this rogue of a so-called priest!' He was moved thereupon to tell us more of Reibald's stories, but these and some of his further comments on the situation are scarcely relevant here!

Wolfgang has made his peace with the Archbishop and with the small-town atmosphere of Salzburg, much as it irks him. For though I am glad to say he has been restored here to his old health and good looks, he feels he will be able to write really great music only when he has freed himself from everything in him that is Salzburgian. He goes out little, and his chief refuge from the drabness of our local society is still Michael Haydn. They sometimes sit together all night, drinking a good deal, I dare say, but also talking about

music, their own works, the old masters, and Wolfgang's plans.

My brother has become more reasonable, I would almost say frighteningly reasonable, regarding Colloredo. He performs his duties at the Cathedral and at Court with all punctiliousness, though he leaves us in no doubt how little relish he has for these duties. He writes Masses and Offertories, also symphonies and serenades for the enjoyment of the Archbishop's table, just as the Prince requires them.

Andreas Schachtner has often been in our house recently, and although he is a little pompous, we all like him for his kindliness and good nature. Sally must exercise a horrible fascination over him; whenever she comes over to retail the latest gossip from the Lodron Palace, Schachtner seems unable to avoid her, however irritated he may be by her incessant chattering and giggles.

Our worthy Court Trumpeter has just written a libretto, called *Zaide*; it has a Turkish background, which is apparently the latest thing in opera settings. He was beside himself with joy when Wolfgang agreed to compose the music for it, and he told everybody in Salzburg about the magnificent project. He even wrote to the Viennese and Munich court theatres, notifying them that a masterpiece would shortly be offered them; the fact that they did not reply to his letters by no means diminished his enthusiasm.

It was I who persuaded Wolfgang to write the music for *Zaide*. Ever since I had spoken to Aloysia Weber on the Mönchsberg, I had waited patiently for the letter from Munich which would bring the Elector's commission. As it did not arrive, I felt it was better that Wolfgang should be working at *Zaide* than at no opera at all.

But Fate willed that this very afternoon, when he and Schachtner had finally settled down to work, Teresa should enter with a huge sealed envelope brought by special courier from Munich. It contained the commission to write an *opera seria* for the Munich Court Opera, and the libretto was enclosed. With wondering eyes Wolfgang read the title-page, *Idomeneo*. He was too overjoyed and bewildered to think how the commission had come to be given him. 'Papa, Papa!' he shouted ecstatically, as if Papa were to be brought from the top of the house instead of from the next room. 'Look, Papa! Nannerl, Schachtner, look, all of you! Here it is, here it is! The opera! The opera I've been waiting to write all my life! *Idomeneo*!'

Then he dashed madly to the piano, and began a powerful improvisation, melody following melody, a cascade of glorious, heavenly

music. I stood there with Papa, rooted to the ground, neither of us daring to move or utter a sound lest we disturb the flow of inspiration. But poor Andreas Schachtner had recognised his doom! On tiptoe he stole up behind Wolfgang, carefully picked up the manuscript of his *Zaide* and put it in his pocket. Then, without a saying word, he crept out of the room, nobly resigned to the death of a masterpiece—still-born.

Salzburg, 6th May 1780

IT is a different Nannerl who today confides in her diary: not the dry, resigned, spinsterly piano-teacher—no, and again no! It is the young woman, radiant with happiness, who loves the most wonderful man and knows that he returns that love.

His name is Franz d'Yppold, and he is a captain in the Imperial War Council. Both his brothers are gallant serving officers—as were his grandfather, his father and two of his uncles. He is fifty years old, nearly two heads taller than I am, slim, and of a noble, erect bearing. Perhaps because of his extremely clear blue eyes he reminds me a little of the Emperor; except that all which was cold and crabbed in Joseph is free, open, and sincere, in Franz. Never before have I encountered anybody more deeply imbued with loving charity for all his fellow-men. Whatever may happen to the two of us, nothing will ever shake my conviction that he is the gentlest man in the world, incapable of a bad deed, an unfriendly word, a base or malicious thought.

The Countess Lodron—to whom we Mozarts already owe so much—introduced him to me in February at the Officers' Ball. 'Nannerl', she said, 'I would like to present to you a friend of mine who is one of the noblest men of his generation, Captain Franz d'Yppold. I know that it needs the precious qualities of your heart truly to appreciate him.' And turning to him she said: 'Mademoiselle Mozart, my dear Franz, is the only girl among all my acquaintances who I do not doubt will understand you as you would wish to be understood.' Then she left us alone, and we looked at each other silently and seriously. Just as I felt that I stood opposite my fate, so he too must

have known that, come what may, our two lives from that moment belonged together.

Three months have passed since then. We see each other daily, and whenever he has leisure we walk together for hours in happy solitude. We speak but little, for the silences between us are serene and companionable. Once I asked him how it could be that in such a small town we two had not met before; he told me he had been away in the wars for many years, at headquarters in Silesia, and later in Hungary and Istria. Now that he has come back to live in Salzburg, he is chained for days to his desk, where he works on maps and fortification plans and military training. He speaks of the Imperial Army and his former regiment, its officers and common soldiers alike, with the enthusiastic love which painters have for their pictures, or musicians for their scores. His solid dependability and his perfectly ordered mode of life reveal a new world for me, just as everything which has been normal to my environment till now must be wholly foreign to him.

It rained today as it can only rain in Salzburg, and as we watched the raindrops drumming unceasingly against our windows, Franz asked me to tell him more about my girlhood. So I began recounting the story of our great journeys, of the Empress, Versailles, the English King, our concerts, the sums of money we 'child prodigies' earned, and of the vast applause and acclamation which everywhere surrounded us. I suppose my eyes must have lit up at the proud memories, for after a pause Franz asked me gently: 'And do you miss all that, Nannerl?'

I thought for a few moments, because I wanted to be completely honest and candid with him; and only after I had examined my heart did I answer: 'No, Franz, I miss nothing, and I would not ask to have anything back from the past—since I have found you.'

On this he took me carefully but firmly in his arms for the first time, and kissed me long and ardently.

Salzburg, 13th November 1780

I reproduce the poster, as nearly as I can from memory:

Today, Saturday, 23rd September 1780
at the Theatre of the Town of Salzburg

EMANUEL SCHIKANEDER

presents the first performance of

HAMLET, PRINCE OF DENMARK

or

'Melancholy and Revenge

a new, great, heroic, tragi-comedy, in five acts,

written and devised by

EMANUEL SCHIKANEDER

(freely based on an old English play)

directed by the author

by whom it is dedicated in deepest reverence to our Sovereign
the Prince Archbishop Hieronymus Count Colloredo.

Emanuel Schikaneder will have the honour not only

to play the tragic figure of the Prince of Denmark,

but will also, after the pathetic death of the hero,

delight the audience in his celebrated role

of

Jack Pudding

in which role he will sing a song, written and composed by himself

'Down he goes into the Pit'

Honoured Salzburgers,

world-famous for your patronage of the arts, the favour of your
presence is graciously requested by the humble provider of your
entertainment,

EMANUEL SCHIKANEDER

Director, Actor, Poet, Playwright, Comedian, Composer, Singer,
etc. etc.

Entrance fee: 20 Kreutzers

These posters were displayed throughout Salzburg from early morning onwards, and of course we decided to go to the theatre that night.

'Written and devised by Emanuel Schikaneder', murmured Papa with a chuckle. 'And to think that till now I always believed *Hamlet* was written and devised by a gentleman called Shakespeare! No matter: Herr Schikaneder seems to be decidedly a man of parts, and I suppose we may take it that this will be a different and far more modern version. Anyhow it should prove a pleasant evening's entertainment.'

We arrived at the theatre only a very short time before the performance started, and were amused to find the melancholy Dane in full costume and paint, with the famous skull next to him, seated behind the counter at the entrance to the theatre, selling tickets with great dispatch. Wolfgang drew his sixty kreutzers from his pocket and asked for three tickets.

'By all the powers above, 'tis the Chevalier Mozart!' exclaimed 'Hamlet' exuberantly. 'I recognised you at once from the portraits, and I welcome you most happily and heartily within this temple of Thalia, Blessed Muse of the Theatre. Only last night did I pitch my tents in Salzburg, wherefore occasion hath not yet served me to pay my homage to so renowned a maestro.' He picked up the sixty kreutzers now lying before him, and with a flamboyant gesture handed the money back to Wolfgang. Then he bowed, and declared in a deep, resonant voice: 'Nay, Chevalier, I would never think of accepting base coin from a fellow artist. May I therefore escort you and your family as my guests to the Box of Honour?'

I blushed, and Papa coughed in embarrassment, while Wolfgang himself, also rather disconcerted, tried to disclaim such privileges; disregarding which, Herr Schikaneder rose and led us towards the said box, much to the curiosity and astonishment of the assembled Salzburger.

I had never seen or read the play of *Hamlet*, knowing it only from Papa's descriptions, and I was much moved by the fate of the unhappy prince and his poor Ophelia, although the actress who took this latter part was middle-aged and rather stout. In any case Herr Schikaneder had taken good care that our withers should not be too violently wrung by our sympathy with the characters, for hardly had Hamlet been stabbed to death by Laertes on the boards when an

epilogue began which was certainly never written by Shakespeare, wherein Hamlet transformed himself into Jack Pudding and, surrounded by all the players of the tragedy, sang, danced, cracked jokes and related several humorous anecdotes—of a ripe age. And thus, to the evident satisfaction of the audience, the performance of our ‘tragi-comedy’ ended on a gay and anything but melancholy note.

The final curtain came down, then rose again for a speech from Herr Schikaneder; and when it had fallen again, that ubiquitous gentleman took up his position once more at the exit to the theatre, where he jubilantly received the congratulations of the departing audience. As soon as he noticed us, he addressed Wolfgang: ‘May I hope, most revered young Master, that the humble endeavours of myself and my company have afforded you pleasure?’

‘It was a most agreeable evening, Herr Schikaneder’, Wolfgang replied, ‘and we all thank you most sincerely for the delightful entertainment you have given us.’ Then he bowed politely and tried to pass on, but he had not taken account of the actor-director’s histrionic extravagance.

‘Oh, highest praise to be lavished on a poor aspiring mime!’ Schikaneder declaimed, so loudly that a circle began to form round us, no one wishing to miss this free additional epilogue. ‘Yes’, he went on, ‘I too feel that tonight’s was a finely inspired performance—and now thrice blessed because it has earned the praise of one whose brow has been kissed by all the Muses on Olympus’ heights!’

With that he knelt down, seized Wolfgang’s hands and kissed them, while tears of joy rolled down his cheeks. They seemed real tears, and it looked true emotion, but theatrical people, as I learnt from his later behaviour, are capable, even off the stage, of simulating such passions most marvellously; and perhaps he was only giving the Salzburger an additional tit-bit to talk about next day.

At any rate it was highly embarrassing for us, and to effect a diversion I invited Herr Schikaneder to visit us on the morrow and take lunch with us. ‘It will be a great honour for me, Mademoiselle’, he said, as he rose from his knees, ‘a splendid and enviable honour indeed. Yet listen! We poor strolling players are wont to celebrate notable occasions at the time they arise. An evening such as the Graces and Muses have granted us tonight should never conclude without a celebration, and my company, together with some patrons and admirers, are assembled on the stage to that very end, to wit

celebration. May I entreat you to join us and thus most wondrously lend lustre to our company?’

We could hardly refuse, and soon we found ourselves sitting next to Schikaneder-Hamlet at the top of the table, amidst a medley of actors and actresses, all eating, drinking, talking, laughing and singing. Ophelia brought in a huge tureen of pea-soup with sausages, and handed round filled bowls. ‘That is Eleonora, my good lady’, Schikaneder informed us with a wry smile. ‘Indubitably she once had certain advantages, although today they lie neither in the realms of dramatic genius nor in those of beauty. Her father of blessed memory was the master of our company, and on his deathbed he entrusted me with the fate not only of his enterprise but also of his daughter. She is still, as I hope you will agree, a passing Ophelia, though I fear not blest with the fire of divine afflatus.’

Now Polonius rolled a barrel of beer on to the stage and invited all those present to fill their glasses. Gertrude, a comely enough lass who apparently enjoyed the director’s active patronage, had taken a guitar in her hands and plunged into saucy songs. Later on Schikaneder told stories about his wanderings through Germany, and when we crossed Hannibal Square on the way home, long after midnight, we were still laughing at all the drollery with which he and his company had beguiled us.

The next day he appeared at our house carrying a bouquet of chrysanthemums, which he presented to me with a great flourish. When I saw him for the first time without wig or costume or paint, I was surprised to find that in spite of coarse features and extremely thick lips he was a good-looking, elegant man of about thirty, with pleasant manners (apart from certain tricks of his trade) and a wit and intelligence above the average.

In the hilarity of the previous night’s party, he had begun to call Wolfgang ‘brother o’mine’, and now he seemed eager to introduce this appellation all the time. ‘I cannot tell you, brother o’mine’, he exclaimed, ‘how delighted I am that we two have at last come together. Jupiter and Uranus meet, and a new world is born. In this constellation, brother o’mine, there are new ideas, great new ideas—drama, comedy, opera.’

Wolfgang said he was writing an *opera seria* for the Munich court theatre. He gave Schikaneder the book of *Idomeneo* to read, and played over to him parts of the music already composed. Then they

sat together for many hours, talking about the possibilities of the new work. Schikaneder suggested here a small cut, there some slight addition or amplification; he saw how the second act might be given a more effective conclusion, and altogether put forward many excellent ideas for increasing the general tempo.

Yes, our new friend is a true theatrical Jack-of-all-trades. He really knows a great deal about all sides of his profession, above all how to move an audience and how to make them laugh. It is a fine piece of fortune that he has stormed into Wolfgang's life just when my brother needs all the encouragement and guidance he can get; and I am glad to notice that Schikaneder puts aside all his extravagances while he is alone with us. But the moment a potential audience enters the room, this perfectly normal and reasonable human being changes abruptly into an affected, ranting actor, whose only ambition is to collect applause.

He is unusual in every respect, and perhaps it is only my conventional nature which somehow cannot wholly accept him. Certainly I disapprove of his thorough lack of morals where women and money are concerned. He borrows money everywhere, and squanders it with negligent generosity. As to women, he never lets one pass without making some attempt at seduction; I was safe only because I showed him at once that my attentions were firmly attached elsewhere. Today he brags childishly, exaggerates, and tells the most senseless lies; tomorrow he will be meek, modest, gnawed by doubts. A rake, a glutton and a spendthrift when he has something in his bag; and a jovial, shameless beggar when he has not.

One day, when I had unwittingly caught him out in some characteristic piece of *braggadocio*, I asked: 'Have you ever thought where such habits and behaviour will bring you in the end?'

'I think of nothing else all day, my dear Nannerl', he returned with a laugh. 'I suppose either I shall become a very great man, or else I shall end in some ignominious gutter.'

'Or both', I suggested; at which he became very serious. 'Or both', he echoed pensively. 'You may be right, Nannerl. I had never thought of that.' Before my eyes he changed abruptly into Hamlet, with Yorick's skull in his hand: 'My gorge rises at it. Where be your gibes now? your gambols? your songs? your flashes of merriment. . . ? Yes, Nannerl, perhaps it will be both.'

Night after night Wolfgang went to the theatre to admire his new friend as Macbeth, Lear or Shylock, and an undreamed new world of Shakespeare was unfolded to him, however 'freely based' and Schikanederised. And if the manager-player desired musical items for his dramas and *divertissements*, he always found Wolfgang very ready to compose them.

Schikaneder was fully occupied during the day, with rehearsals, selling tickets and distributing posters; so the two often spent much of the night together. Nor was it only a one-sided affection on Wolfgang's part, for Schikaneder also felt himself powerfully drawn towards my brother. I could see this clearly, and it redeemed for me many of the flaws in his character. He showed almost as much enthusiasm as Wolfgang for the progress of 'the great work' (as he called *Idomeneo*), and gave unstintedly any help or advice he could. They discussed a great many plans for the future, and promised to remain in close touch.

This engrossing friendship had lasted just over a month when Wolfgang received a letter by express post, requesting him to hasten to Munich with the score of *Idomeneo*, as rehearsals were due to begin very shortly. Colloredo was far from pleased that his Court Organist should require leave of absence once more, but he could not refuse it since it was in response to a personal request by the Bavarian Elector.

So once more we all stood outside the mail-coach to bid Wolfgang God-speed and good fortune in Munich. Schikaneder was with us too; he embraced his friend and, following the old theatrical custom, spat at Wolfgang three times. The coach started moving. Wolfgang waved to us from the window, and then was gone. Schikaneder gazed after him for a long time, and murmured very sadly: 'Go with God brother o'mine.'

At the end of August, Franz travelled to Hungary in the Emperor's *entourage* to take part in the autumn manoeuvres. We wrote little to each other while he was away, for I did not wish to distract him from military matters, but we knew that each was in the other's thoughts and that even in separation we belonged together.

Two days ago Papa left the house early in the morning to go with the court orchestra to Gmunden, where the Prince-Archbishop and his whole court are entertaining a passing Papal Legate.

At four o'clock that afternoon I chanced to be looking out of the window into the approaching dusk. Suddenly, like an apparition, Franz stood in front of the house, the collar of his greatcoat turned up, the cocked hat deep over his brow. I ran into the hall and opened the door; a moment later I lay in his arms. We walked slowly into the sitting room, our hands tightly clasped; neither of us said anything, but my heart was beating as if it would burst.

Franz took me in his arms again, and kissed me: long, hot, passionate kisses. I was blissfully content in the knowledge that the hour had at last arrived which would make me most truly a woman. The fire crackled in the stove, and the pungent smell of burning wood filled the room. Its warmth made us weak, and took away our will. He looked at me with an unspoken question filling his clear blue eyes. I looked back at him—and I gave him my answer.

He remained here that night and last night too; and we have now made our plans. We shall marry in the spring. Franz, as an officer, has to apply to the Imperial War Council for permission to marry, but he does not expect any objections. In the meantime I shall prepare my trousseau, and gradually begin to put everything in order so that Teresa will be able to look after Papa and Wolfgang without my help—when, in April or May, I become Frau d'Yppold.

Salzburg, middle of March 1781

ALTHOUGH we cannot yet publicly announce it, all our friends recognise me as virtually betrothed to Franz, and I find myself with more well-wishers than I had credited; a private letter from Wolfgang also expressed vast pleasure in my new-found happiness, and said this match was just what he had hoped for on my behalf. Franz has not yet, however, submitted his application for permission to marry, out of consideration for Papa who cannot give his wholehearted approval to our plans.

He likes and admires Franz, but stresses that we come from very different worlds and declares himself concerned over the difference in our ages. I do not need his consent, of course, but I would be loath to marry against his express wish, and Franz, with his true

gentleness, accepts the delay so as to win Papa's full confidence.

The only other cloud on our happiness is that I have seen exceedingly little of Franz since those magical days in November. Recent political events and strategic problems, together with a senior officer's sickness, have laid on Franz's shoulders an intolerable amount of additional work which he is too conscientious to skimp in any way; and he often has to leave Salzburg for weeks at a time. If he is tired from his labours, he is still as passionate and tender with me as ever, and the memory of our infrequent brief hours together are a precious solace to me when we are separated.

'I believe', he told me one day, 'that your father is slowly coming to consider me as one of the family. Next week you are off to Munich, and alas, when you return, I fear I shall be away. But as soon as I come back, I shall have a serious talk with him; and if he agrees, I will send in my application directly.'

Wolfgang's twenty-fifth birthday fell on 27th January, which chanced to be the night of the dress rehearsal for *Idomeneo*, so Papa and I travelled to Munich to be present and to attend the opera's opening night.

The dress rehearsal was highly successful, and Wolfgang was elated. I was sure my brother had this time written something particular, yet I was exceedingly nervous, even apprehensive, when we entered our box at the Opera House two nights later. For one thing, it was the very same box from which six years ago we had watched the first performance of the *Finta Giardiniera*, and the memory of my personal chagrin that evening would not now leave me.

It was much the same with Papa. Of course on this occasion he did not need to stand outside the theatre in servile manner awaiting the arrival of the Archbishop. But even after the dress rehearsal he kept wondering whether Wolfgang had hit on the right style, had provided sufficient of what Papa called 'popular music'. 'Do not have any fears for that', Wolfgang assured him. 'In this new opera of mine there is music, my dear Papa, for all sorts of people—except those with long ears!' We smiled, and the fateful evening at once lost some of its tension; Wolfgang indeed seemed the least concerned of any of us.

On the stroke of seven the door of the Royal Box opened, and the Elector entered with his rather withered-looking wife and a brilliant retinue of courtiers.

Wolfgang rose from his piano in the orchestra, and bowed deeply to His Highness, who acknowledged this with a friendly gesture of the hand. Karl Theodor, it suggested, was too great a man to bear any grudges; and, whatever his failings, he is a true lover of music.

I believe that almost from the first bar of the overture everyone in the audience, from the Elector downwards, recognised the greatness and power of this music, just as I did; and their appreciation increased as the opera developed. Wolfgang had composed straight from his heart, and for the first time had translated the depths and passions of personal experience into the noble language of music. I could catch the undertones of joys and sorrows in Mannheim, Paris, Munich—Mama's death, his adoration of Aloysia and the sting of her rejection. Yes, Aloysia had aroused his genius, and perhaps Schikaneder-Shakespeare had given it wings.

Time and again I wondered how my brother had been able to write *Idomeneo* while he was still doing the round of his daily duties, exchanging superficial civilities with worthy Salzburgers, eating, drinking and sleeping—or latterly, sitting up all hours with Schikaneder. At any rate I heard a new brilliance and fire in the score; for the first time he had introduced chorus and ballet into the tapestry of the drama; and in a young man of twenty-five such a rich flow of musical ideas, sounding forth in each aria, could not but be a source of amazement.

That all these observations of mine do not merely betray an excess of sisterly bias was proved by the prodigious enthusiasm of the audience, which at the end of the performance burst into applause more thunderous and sustained than I have ever heard at a theatre before. The acclamation reached its height as the Court Chamberlain was seen to appear on the stage and invite Wolfgang to the Royal Box.

'*Bravo, bravissimo!*' Karl Theodor greeted him. 'An enchanting opera, Mozart, which earns my sincere admiration.' Wolfgang kissed His Highness' hand, and the Elector continued: 'I am astonished and profoundly impressed. To look at you, no one would believe such great things are tucked away in so small a head.' He took Wolfgang's arm, led him into a corner of the box, and there added very softly, so that none of the courtiers should hear: 'Our Mademoiselle Weber has done a great thing. Let me thank you, dear Mozart, and not least for the music itself.' With that he once more gave a bewildered

Wolfgang his hand to be kissed, and then departed, followed by his wife and the ladies and gentlemen of his suite.

‘Whatever could he have meant, Nannerl?’ Wolfgang asked me that night when we sat together after Papa had gone to bed. ‘What is this great thing Aloysia is supposed to have done for me?’

It was a year and a half since I had promised Aloysia not to tell Wolfgang anything about our encounter, and in the meantime much water had flown under the Danube bridges; by which I would convey that Aloysia in Vienna has become a very different person. The seed she planted at her farewell audience with Karl Theodor has ripened most gloriously; because of this, and because she is no longer free, I felt released of my promise of silence to her. Therefore, although I did not know how he would react, I told Wolfgang about our meeting on the Mönchsberg, and all that I had heard besides about Aloysia’s further fate.

Since the night of his home-coming to Salzburg, when he poured out his heart to me, he had spoken but rarely of the Webers; old Fridolin’s death apparently left him unmoved, and I did not know how much he still thought about Aloysia. It was common knowledge that she had married the Court actor Joseph Lange, but I did not think Wolfgang knew why, and I myself had heard the reasons only from Countess Lodron. So I decided that Wolfgang might as well hear the whole story now.

Last November the Empress Maria Theresa died at Schönbrunn, an embittered and misanthropic old woman. During the last months of her life she had fought desperately to save her son Joseph from the diabolical effects (as she dementedly believed) of Aloysia Weber’s influence. Aloysia had swiftly become a favourite with the Viennese public, and although nobody knew precisely the extent and nature of her relationship with Joseph, this of course did not prevent people discussing it at great length. Some felt it cast a stigma on the Emperor, while others believed it might bring into the confined and unwholesome atmosphere at court some much-needed fresh air.

At any rate the Empress decided on a plan to end all the gossip. Joseph Lange must marry Aloysia Weber within a fortnight. Extremely good-looking and a passable actor, away from the stage Lange was a disreputable individual, coarse, extravagant, given to drinking, and always surrounded by creditors. He was no doubt eager to comply with the Empress’ wishes because he would thus be

saved from his financial embarrassments, and would acquire new prestige as the husband of the much-admired prima donna. The naïve Viennese were to believe, of course, that a sudden romance had developed, most fittingly, between these two well-known personages of the theatre.

The faction which arranged the Empress' plan succeeded in concealing the facts from Joseph until Aloysia's consent had been exacted. They persuaded her with threats and warnings: it would be the better for her if she fell in with the scheme and better for the Emperor too, whose good she must consider if she still retained for him any of the affection she professed. Forced to decide immediately, Aloysia submitted; and the wedding was celebrated in elaborate style.

Only a very few of the initiated knew that relations between the Emperor and the prima donna were quickly resumed; but for the Empress the marriage had closed the scandal. Her son had been freed from evil influences, the House of Habsburg had been saved, and now she could go in peace to join her ancestors in the vault of the Capuchin Monks.

One evening Joseph entered the Empress' room to find his mother writhing on her bed in great agony. Her face was streaming with perspiration, the once-radiant blue eyes had lost their lustre, and her hair fell over the blossom-white sheet in dirty grey strands. The Emperor looked at her for a long time without finding a word to say. 'Your Majesty is lying badly', he at length observed. 'Yes, Your Majesty', replied Maria Theresa, her quavering voice once more firm; 'well enough to die, however.' These were the last words of a woman who had come to the throne of Austria at the age of twenty-three and since then, loved and hated, happy and unhappy, had ruled the country for forty years.

Now Joseph is sole Emperor, and is clearly throwing himself with fervour into the reforms he has planned for so long. In his old green uniform, he travels from town to town, like the Caliph Harun al Raschid, talking to the people and learning their wishes and hopes. His only distraction is the theatre, and whenever he finds the leisure he will sit in the Royal Box following the play or opera intently, discussing it afterwards with the actors and singers.

His court is very simple and unostentatious—some would say drab; and at present his closest friends seem to be a circle of five or six elderly ladies of the aristocracy, with whom he will talk at times

even of his most intimate feelings. Our Countess Lodron is one of these ladies, but even she knows little about present relations between Joseph and Aloysia. She supposes, however, that the two see each other often, and that there is much affection between them which they wish to keep secret; a wish she, like the rest of the Emperor's *entourage*, feels bound to respect.

Wolfgang listened patiently to all I recounted, though some of it could not have been new to him. From time to time he interrupted me with a nervous and even irrelevant question, apparently to cover an inner embarrassment. When I had concluded, he rose and walked up and down the room two or three times. 'Nansterl', he said hesitantly, yet with a certain ring of determination, 'I am not going home with you and Papa.'

I was startled. 'For Heaven's sake, Wolfgang! You have had six weeks' leave from Colloredo! If you stay longer, then. . . .'

'Why, then, he will throw me out. I wish for nothing better.'

On the spur of the moment I asked: 'Wolfgang, it isn't that you want to go to Vienna—to Aloysia?' His reply was ambiguous: 'I don't want to go back to Salzburg.'

A few days later Papa and I went home, while Wolfgang remained in Munich. During the last weeks he had worked exceedingly hard, but now he looked for enjoyment and relaxation, and wanted to hurl himself into the Munich carnival; which indeed I thought he had every right to do. For two long years he had not escaped from the humdrum narrowness of Salzburg, and a little relief was surely due. Because of Munich's spontaneous acclamation, he had become conscious once more of his own worth. Strangers spoke to him in the streets, congratulating him on his success; and now after many years he was invited again into the houses of the aristocracy, where beautiful ladies danced attendance on him, just as they had done in his boyhood. Even Papa and I enjoyed some reflected glory, and when we left, Wolfgang was still being accorded the most princely treatment.

The day after our return the Abbé Bullinger came to dinner, and we had to tell him all about Munich, Wolfgang and *Idomeneo*. Our good friend was delighted. 'Mind now', he said, 'I always knew the lad had it in him. And at present, I assume, he's preparing to indulge in all the pleasures which the carnival has to offer.'

‘I cannot blame him for that’, Papa replied. ‘I am only a little worried about the Archbishop.’

‘Because of the leave, you mean? As for that now, Leopold, you can set your mind at rest. Our Wolfgang has devilish good fortune, I will allow, for the Archbishop left for Vienna yesterday with his whole retinue. To the Imperial Court, paying homage to His Majesty. A state visit, you know.’

‘And how long does the Archbishop think of staying away?’ I asked, delighted by this information.

‘Two months, or perhaps three. Time enough for young Wolfgang to roister away in Munich as much as he pleases.’

Our satisfaction was great, but short-lived, for in one of his next letters Wolfgang informed us: ‘. . . I have received orders from the Archbishop to go immediately to Vienna to join the rest of his staff. I hope to postpone my departure a week or two longer, but I shall not, of course, be able to ignore his commands altogether.’ Nothing here about letting Colloredo throw him out; perhaps Vienna in the Archbishop’s service was more attractive than Salzburg because the Webers were there; yet surely, after what I had told him, Wolfgang could have no further hopes of Aloysia?

Meanwhile strange rumours had reached us concerning Colloredo’s behaviour in Vienna. It was said that he tried desperately to win the admiration of Joseph and the Viennese, scattering largesse everywhere, giving splendid and extravagant parties, and driving daily through the town in his princely carriage drawn by eight horses. Despite all this Joseph II remained unimpressed; a coolness which led to even greater ostentation on the Archbishop’s part.

I tried to assemble all these facts into a pattern and it took shape like this: Colloredo has heard of the triumph of *Idomeneo* in Munich. The Emperor treats Colloredo as a nobody. Colloredo knows the Emperor is passionately attached to music and the theatre, and Mozart, the freshly-laurelled young composer, is Colloredo’s servant. Colloredo needs Mozart to impress the Emperor. So Mozart must go to Vienna. Yes, it can be demonstrated like a theorem in geometry.

All this is clear and simple enough when you add up the facts, but there are unknown elements. Will the said young opera composer do his master the favour of shining to the master’s greater glory? or will he now—and I fear this is more likely—refuse the role of obedient servant and thus pay off old scores? Much depends on Colloredo

himself: will *he* treat Wolfgang with a new respect, which is his best chance of winning my brother's obedience, or has he learnt no better than to resume the part of imperious autocrat?

I suppose we shall soon know; for Wolfgang left Munich last week, and by now he should have just arrived in Vienna. I wait in suspense for developments there and for my Franz's return to Salzburg.

Salzburg, 27th June 1781

PAPA gladly gave us his blessing in the end, so Franz duly submitted to the Imperial War Council his application for permission to marry. The only reason we have to fear obstacles is that an officer's wife not only has to be of respectable character and good family, but is expected to bring a dowry with her. Franz feels confident, however, that the War Council will not insist too rigidly on this point, where an officer of his standing and position is concerned.

As it happens, after two months they have not yet vouchsafed him an answer. When I become incensed and exasperated at their slowness, he excuses them with a laugh. 'You, my darling', he says, 'cannot be expected to understand military vagaries. I grant you they have been slow, but no doubt they have far weightier matters to deal with than the mere marriage of one of their officers with the most wonderful girl in the world! In due course I shall, if necessary, prod Their Excellencies, my superiors, but do not lose your patience, I beg of you. It will only make more onerous my own impatience to make you my wife. I am sure we shall have an answer in the next two or three weeks.'

From my dreams of conjugal bliss, mingled with impatience for their fulfilment, I have been frequently distracted by concern over Wolfgang's affairs. I think I shall best be able to epitomise the course of events if I set down certain passages verbatim out of some of the fifteen or twenty letters which Wolfgang has sent to Papa from Vienna.

17th March (just after his arrival): 'We lunch about twelve, and

our party consists of the two valets, the Archbishop's private messenger, the confectioner, two cooks, Ceccarelli the *castrato*, Brunetti the violinist, and—my insignificant self. The valets sit at the top of the table, but at least I have the honour to be placed above the cooks. . . . The Archbishop is so kind as to add to his own lustre by robbing his household of their chance of earning elsewhere, and then pays them nothing. We gave a concert yesterday at four o'clock, and at least twenty persons of the highest rank were present. Today we are to go to the Prince Galizin. If I do not get anything for it, I shall go to the Archbishop and tell him with absolute frankness that if he will not allow me to earn anything, then he must pay me, for I cannot live at my own expense.'

24th March: 'Believe me, I am right in saying that the Archbishop acts as a screen to keep me from the notice of others. What distinction does he confer on me? It would be something if I could sit at the same table as his Private Secretary and his Chamberlain, Count Arco—but not with the valets who have to light the chandeliers, open the doors, and wait in the ante-room while I am playing within.'

4th April: 'How much do you suppose I should make if I were to give a concert on my own now that the public has got to know me? But this Arch-booby of ours will not allow it. He does not want his people to have profit—only loss. I assure you that this is a splendid place, and for my *métier* the best in the world.'

8th April: 'It is said that we are to return to Salzburg in a fortnight. I can stay on here, and positively to my advantage. So I am thinking of asking the Archbishop to allow me to remain in Vienna. Dearest father, were it not for you, I swear to you I should not hesitate for a moment to leave the Archbishop's service. I should give a grand concert, take four pupils, and in a year I should have got on so well in Vienna that I could make at least a thousand guilders. . . . As you say, I am still young. True; but to waste one's youth in inactivity in such a beggarly place as Salzburg would really be very sad.'

On 11th April: 'Next Sunday week Ceccarelli and I are to go home. When I think that I must leave Vienna without bringing home at least a thousand guilders, my heart is sore indeed. So, for the sake of a malevolent Prince who plagues me every day and only pays me a lousy salary of four hundred guilders, I am to throw away a thousand guilders. For I should certainly make that sum if I were to give a concert. I received nothing for the last concert where I composed

my three pieces for the Archbishop's benefit. But what made me almost desperate was that on the very same evening I was invited to the Countess Thun's, but of course could not go; and who should be there but the Emperor! What an opportunity!

28th April: 'You are looking forward to my return with great joy, my dearest father! That is the only thing that can make me decide to leave Vienna. I am writing this without cyphers because the whole world knows and should know that the Archbishop of Salzburg has only you to thank, my most beloved father, that he did not yesterday lose me for ever.'

Then the storm burst, and on May 9th Wolfgang wrote thus, 'still seething with rage': 'My patience has been so long tried that at last it has given out. I am no longer so unfortunate as to be in Salzburg service. Today is a happy day for me. Just listen! Twice already that—I don't know what to call him—has hurled at my head the greatest *sottises* and *impertinences*, which I have not repeated to you as I wished to spare your feelings; and I only refrained from answering them in kind on the spot, because you, dearest father, were ever before my eyes. I endured it all, though I felt that not only my honour but yours was being attacked. But as you would have it so, I was silent. . . .

'A week ago the footman came up unexpectedly and told me to clear out that very instant. All the others had been informed of the day of their departure, but not I. Well, I shoved everything into my trunk in haste, and old Madame Weber has been good enough to take me into her house, where I have a pleasant room. Moreover, I am living with people who are obliging and who supply me with all the things which one cannot have when one is living alone.

'When I saw the Archbishop today, his first words were: "Well, young fellow, when are you going off, eh?" I: "I intended to go tonight, but all the seats were already engaged." Then he rushed on at me without pausing for breath—I was the most dissolute fellow he knew—nobody served him as badly as I did—I had better leave today or else he would write home and have my salary stopped. I couldn't get a word in, for he blazed away like a fire. I listened to it all very calmly. He called me a scoundrel, a rascal, a vagabond—oh, I really cannot tell you all he said.

'At last my blood began to boil: I could not contain myself any longer, and I said: "So Your Grace is not satisfied with me?"

"What, you dare to threaten me, eh, you scoundrel! There is the door, eh, I will have nothing more to do with such a miserable wretch." At last I said: "Nor I with you." "Well, be off with you, eh." When leaving the room, I said: "This is final. You shall have it tomorrow in writing." Tell me now, most beloved father, did I not say the word too late rather than too soon? . . . Do not be the least anxious for me. I am sure of my success in Vienna that I would have resigned anyhow. And now that I have a very good reason, I cannot make a virtue of it. *Au contraire*, I have twice played the coward and I could not do so a third time.

'You are altogether mistaken if you think I shall get a bad name with the Emperor and the nobility, for the Archbishop is detested here and most of all by the Emperor. . . . By the next post I shall send you a little money to show you that I am not starving. Now please be cheerful, for my good luck is just beginning, and I trust that mine will be yours also. Write to me in cypher that you are pleased—and indeed you may well be so—but in public rail at me as much as you like, so that none of the blame may fall on you. But if, in spite of this, the Archbishop should be the slightest bit impertinent to you, come at once with my sister to Vienna, for I give you my word of honour that there is enough for all three of us to live on. Still, I should prefer it if you could hold out for another year. . . .'

12th May: 'You will know from my last letter that I have asked the Prince for my discharge because he himself told me to go, deny it though he of course will. . . . But if I were offered a salary of 2,000 guilders by the Archbishop and only 1,000 guilders elsewhere, I should still take the second offer. For instead of the extra 1,000 guilders I should enjoy good health and peace of mind. . . .'

Wolfgang was so full of the rightness of his decision, or else guessed so surely how Papa would respond, that he wrote another letter the same day, stressing that he had in Vienna 'the finest and most useful connections. I am liked and respected by the greatest families. All possible honour is shown me and I am paid into the bargain. So why should I pine away in Salzburg for the sake of 400 guilders, linger on without remuneration or encouragement and be of no use to you in any way, when I can certainly help you here? What would be the end of it? Always the same. I should have to endure one insult after another or go away again. . . .'

Papa, of course, could not see the conflict at all in this light. He

begged Wolfgang to be reasonable, to take the first step towards a reconciliation with the Archbishop, who, Papa felt sure, would accept it at once; and he implored Wolfgang to leave the Webers' apartment as soon as possible. Wolfgang was evidently hurt by Papa's tone, and on this last point expressed himself thus: 'What you say about the Webers, I do assure you is not true. I was a fool, I admit, about Aloysia Lange, but what man is not when he is in love? Indeed I loved her truly, and even now I feel that she is not a matter of indifference to me.'

Oh dear! So that was one of Wolfgang's reasons for wishing to stay in Vienna. He was still in love with Aloysia, and had moved to the Webers so as to have some connection with her, hoping perhaps one day to win her back. The fool—did he forget that she belonged to the Emperor? And the next sentence was even stronger: 'Indeed it is a good thing for me that her husband is a jealous fool and lets her go nowhere, so that I seldom have an opportunity of seeing her.'

Joseph Lange jealous of Aloysia! When everyone in Vienna knew there was only the barest semblance of a true marriage between these two! Had the old Weber woman talked Wolfgang into something which might one day be of advantage to her? Strange that Wolfgang should refer to her as a 'Very obliging woman—and I cannot do enough for her in return for her kindness. . . .'

Well, all Papa's remonstrances proved useless. Wolfgang sent us more letters full of fury against the Archbishop, coupled with protestations of how advantageous it would be if he were to stay in Vienna; for instance, he told us that Gottlieb Stephanie, stage-director of the German Opera in Vienna, was going to give him an opera to compose. However, the Archbishop did not relish the amount of talk in Vienna concerning my brother and himself, so he asked Count Arco, brother of our Countess Lodron, to try to smooth over the whole affair and prevail upon Wolfgang to withdraw his application to resign.

At their first interviews the Count did his best to put things in a friendly manner, but my brother clung stubbornly to his resolve, averring that he was more respected in Vienna than the Archbishop. 'They know him', Wolfgang told Arco, 'as a presumptuous, conceited priest, who despises everyone here, whereas I am considered a very amiable person. It is true that I become proud when someone treats me with contempt—which is the way the Archbishop invariably

treats me; whereas by kind words he could have made me do as he pleased. . . .’ At one point the Count asked him: ‘Don’t you think I too have often to swallow very disagreeable words?’ To which my brother replied: ‘You no doubt have your reasons for putting up with it, and I—have my reasons for refusing to do so.’

Unfortunately, the Count declined to forward Wolfgang’s several applications to resign. So, shortly before Colloredo was leaving for Salzburg, Wolfgang tried to force his way into the princely suite to see the Archbishop personally. In the ante-chamber Count Arco restrained him forcibly, and in the end kicked him out of the room. ‘Salzburg has ceased to exist for me’, Wolfgang wrote the next day, ‘except that I long for a good opportunity to return the Count’s kick on my arse, even if it should have to be in the public street. . . .’

His fury was understandable, for this was surely disgusting treatment. He professed to believe that the Count’s insults were carried out ‘by order of our worthy Prince-Archbishop’; and plainly the damage was now irreparable. I myself was only surprised that such a decisive scene had not taken place weeks earlier.

Papa, however, was inconsolable about the course things had taken. He consulted Uncle Hagenauer and the Abbé Bullinger, but what indeed could they advise? Swallowing his pride, Papa had written letters in the last weeks both to the Archbishop and to Count Arco (of course without Wolfgang’s knowledge), begging them to be patient with his son; but he might have saved himself the trouble. There was plainly nothing any of us could do now.

I too discounted much of Wolfgang’s facile hopes of making a fair living in Vienna, with a nice sufficiency of aristocratic pupils, grand concerts, commissions to write operas, and the rest of it—yet I could understand, better than Papa, the attractions independence would have for my brother. The more I thought about it, the more I suspected that at twenty-five, without being aware of it, he had found the need to shake off once and for all the bonds of filial obedience—to the most loving but also the most possessive of fathers.

If this suspicion be justified, how my heart bleeds for Papa! He will perhaps never fully recover from ~~Mama~~ Mama’s death; he is soon to lose me, who might have been a comfort to his declining years, and now all his hopes for Wolfgang’s happiness and success seem shattered for good. Even more obviously now will our wretched little Salzburgers look the other way when they see him coming, and pass

quickly by lest he should approach them for a loan of money. How he would have liked them to take off their cocked hats to him, or stop behind him and whisper to each other: 'There he goes, our greatly esteemed Court Kapellmeister Mozart—you know, the father of the great Wolfgang Amadeus. . . .'

Early yesterday afternoon all the church bells began ringing to greet our Sovereign Prince-Archbishop, who had returned to Salzburg after an absence of three months. And yesterday evening a courier arrived in Hannibal Square with a command from the Prince that we should present ourselves at his Residence at nine o'clock this morning. Papa, in his humour of general despair, was positive that the Archbishop meant to inform him of his dismissal from the court's service; but I felt equally certain that it was nothing of the kind. Had he intended to dismiss Papa, he would surely have preferred to send a letter, communicating 'a painful decision which he deeply regretted, etc. etc.'; nor would he have been in such a hurry, and most certainly he would not have required my presence at this audience. No, Colloredo must be anxious to justify his conduct over Wolfgang.

My guess proved correct. Next morning, when we were shown into a private room at the Residence, we found the Archbishop sitting very stiffly at his writing desk with Count Arco standing respectfully behind him. When we entered, he rose, gave us his hand to be kissed, and asked us both to take seats.

'I have requested you to come here with your daughter, Herr Vize-Kapellmeister', he began in a quiet and courteous manner, 'in order to make you acquainted with *my* version of the events which led to your son's dismissal from my service. "*Etiam altera pars audiatur*" is a fundamental doctrine of Roman Law, and should be of all human relationships. Until you have heard what I have to say, I should be very sorry if you too, like your son, should judge me as a petty, inhuman tyrant, or as—to quote the young man verbatim, eh?—a presumptuous, conceited priest who despises everybody. . . .'

At this Papa rose and was about to say something; but Colloredo forestalled him: 'Please, Mozart! My spies are posted to intercept important letters, and they only do their duty, eh?' He took a step towards us, and then continued very earnestly: 'Your son, Mozart, and your brother, Mademoiselle, is a genius, one of the very few the world contains. A musical genius, I must qualify it; for in all other

aspects of life he is a hopeless bungler. I am candid enough to tell you that, according to my profound conviction, he will never learn these other things. If, as the philosophers teach us, man's happiness or unhappiness is produced by two components, namely the circumstances which surround him and his individual nature, then I fear that despite all the gifts he has inherited, his character will ever destroy in Wolfgang Mozart the possibilities of earthly happiness. As to his spiritual salvation it is not for me to speak.'

He paused, and I found myself impressed by the deeply serious, dispassionate way in which he had spoken. Even though he expressed a most unhappy and indeed terrible opinion concerning my beloved brother, I might almost have been listening to a homily on moral virtues. When he resumed, there was a sad note in his voice:

'Nine years ago, when I saw your son, Mozart, for the first time, it was not difficult to see in him the extraordinary, I would almost say the unique; but with that I recognised a danger lurking in the hidden recesses of his soul. Yes, I recognised his pride, and all the temptations it would set up for him. I did not envy him his genius, but I knew that perhaps I alone could subdue his pride, and thus, without hampering his true genius, could allow him to become a happy man. I tell you that he needed sternness as well as kindness, chastening as well as praise. My efforts were in vain, and I saw that the decisive test would come in Vienna. For there I wished to show him off to the Emperor, and to the whole world, as the genius I had nurtured in my own house.'

'Out of affection for my brother, Your Highness?' I interjected, hoping the question would not sound impertinent or ironical.

'You have the right to ask that, Mademoiselle', he replied; 'and I will confess to you that it was not out of affection alone. Call it joy of possession; call it vanity, or pride. But at least pride in your brother's qualities. Would you blame me for that?'

'And was there no way', Papa murmured ruefully, 'of talking to him just as you now talk to us? As a friend, I mean; as a fellow human being.'

For a moment this question seemed to excite the Archbishop out of his dignified calm, so that he exclaimed: 'Not worth it, Mozart. He'd never have listened. And also far too late, eh! Your son already had it firmly planted in his head that I, and I alone, was the stumbling-block to his whole career. So in Vienna, eh, he must needs run

around from one little aristocratic goose to another, flooding the town with childish gossip about my person and my rule in Salzburg. No one could be expected, eh, to talk to such a slanderer as a friend.'

Colloredo continued with words which moved me despite all the natural feelings I held against him: 'However, I would apologise to you both, on behalf of Count Arco as well as on my own account, for the violence used in the antechamber of my suite at Vienna, which I regret very much indeed. I know this incident will not remain unknown and will be embellished anew every time it is told. If Wolfgang Mozart's genius should carry him forward to glory despite his failings, then I, no doubt, shall carry this heavy stigma to the grave or even beyond. That is a sad thought for me, but no sadder than the thought of the unhappy life to which I fear young Mozart is doomed—when I should've dearly have wished to contribute to its happiness. You may like to know', he concluded abruptly, 'that I have appointed Herr Michael Haydn his successor as the Cathedral Organist and my Court Konzertmeister.'

So ended our audience; and so ends the story of my brother's relations with Hieronymus, Count Colloredo, Prince-Archbishop of Salzburg, Primate of Germany and Legate of the Roman Curia.

Salzburg, 27th December 1781

A MONTH after I last wrote in this diary, Franz received his answer from the Imperial War Council; but it was not the answer he had so confidently predicted. They regretted that they were unable to give a decision, and the application was therefore being forwarded to the Imperial Chancellory.

For nearly five months we waited and hoped, but there was no word from the Chancellory. Twice Franz tried to hasten the decision through the intervention of certain influential friends, but both times he had to be content with the same worn commonplaces for reply: the matter was in hand, and would be settled in due course through official channels. 'Well', said Franz, expressing a patience I know he did not feel, 'I suppose it's the good old Austrian method, and we shall just have to go on waiting.'

But I was unwilling to wait any longer. As Papa had already suggested, the Chancellory's refusal to answer Franz' application could be taken as tantamount to rejection. It would doubtless be too disagreeable for them to declare outright the odious truth: that an army officer may not marry the woman he loves unless her father's purse be crammed with money. The Mozarts are a good enough family, so there can be no other reason.

On the other hand, they cannot want to lose one of their ablest officers, and Franz has offered to resign from the army if his application is refused—but that is a sacrifice I could not and must not permit him to make. For generations soldiering has been in his blood, and what would he do out of the Emperor's uniform? Turn school-master or private tutor, seek a post as clerk in some petty business house—at fifty it is not so easy to find new employment—or live on a tiny pension in premature retirement? He would never be happy, and that would be the end of my own happiness also.

No, I had had enough of the official channels, and made up my mind there was only one chance left: to go to Vienna and ask for an audience with the Emperor. He had always been kind to me, and I would kneel before him and beg him to give us permission for our marriage.

I arrived in the capital at the end of November, and learnt to my dismay that Joseph II was on a tour of inspection in the Tyrol and was not expected back before Christmas. At first I thought I would go home and return in January, but Wolfgang persuaded me to remain, and passed on to me an invitation from Frau Weber to stay with her as long as I was in Vienna. I had already begun to assess the situation in which Wolfgang found himself, and decided that it would be very useful to make a closer acquaintance with the Webers, who were evidently still playing such an important part in his life.

The family, consisting of mother and three daughters (Aloysia Lange, of course, has her own quarters) lives near St Peter's Church in a house called 'The Eye of God'. Many years ago a great fire raged in Vienna, destroying hundreds of houses, and all round St Peter's only this one house remained untouched; this is how it came by its lovely name.

There were surprises in store for me at 'The Eye of God', and the first of them concerned 'old' Frau Weber. I had thought of her as about sixty, and imagined a fat, ugly, wrinkled old harridan;

whereas she cannot be much over forty, and it is hard to believe she has adult daughters. She is of medium height, and still has a good figure, rich auburn hair and a voluptuous mouth with perfect white teeth. She can be very amusing, and her laugh, though one can detect a coarse note in it, is not unattractive; while her voice, except when she is drunk, is soft and melodious—altogether a very different *ensemble* from the picture I had built up in my mind.

She greeted me in a rather over-effusive way, and led me at once into the sitting-room, where she introduced me to a man of about forty, who sat at the table in his shirt-sleeves and appeared to be very much one of the family. Some people think one should never judge anybody by first impressions, and others that these impressions are by far the most valuable and decisive. I have often inclined to the latter view, but never felt more sure of its correctness than on first meeting Herr Johann Thorwart, guardian of the Weber girls, and Frau Weber's lover. He is very tall, and thin as a rake, with an absurdly small head to sit on such a body; I was reminded of a vulture lying in wait to pounce on some victim. He was smiling, but the smile was anything but a pleasant one; I could almost see the malice and treachery imperfectly concealed behind it. According to Wolfgang, the man started his career as an apprentice to a hair-dresser, became wig-maker to the Court Theatre, and is there supposed to have made a great deal of money by procuring young ladies for licentious aristocrats, from whom he would afterwards extort considerable sums under threats of exposing their behaviour. He found his way into the accountancy of the theatre, and eventually reached his present important position as auditor. After Fridolin's death from a stroke two years ago he moved to the Webers', first as a lodger and later as a favourite of the lady of the house, who called him 'cousin', doubtless to save herself long explanations in front of strangers.

When I entered the room, he put on his jacket, and declared unctuously: 'I kiss the hand of Mademoiselle Mozart with deepest respect.' I gave him an indifferent nod, and Frau Weber said to him: 'A glass of wine for our dear Wolfgang's sister, Cousin Thorwart.' 'But with the greatest of pleasure', he replied, turning his smile into a positive leer, and handed me the wine like a poisoner on the stage who gives his victim the fatal cup. I was quite surprised after three minutes to find that I had received no harm from this drink!

If Cousin Thorwart was my second surprise at 'The Eye of God', the third and biggest was provided by Wolfgang himself. He had begun a love affair with Constanze Weber, Aloysia's younger sister, or rather had been forced into such an affair. It may be that earlier he had flirted with the girl a little and had told her that he liked her; but from there on he was led into a trap by Mama Weber and her fine 'cousin'. Thorwart had perhaps heard behind the scenes of the Court Theatre that this young man, who had been dismissed by the Archbishop of Salzburg, might soon get an Imperial commission to write an opera—so today's indigent musician might tomorrow become a good match.

The three unmarried girls in the house had long been a thorn in Cousin Thorwart's flesh, and the quicker they could be disposed of, the better. Here was an unhoped-for occasion to get rid of at least one of them, so Constanze was set at the young musician, and without many scruples she gave herself to the humiliating game; perhaps any means was good enough if it allowed her to get away from a domineering mother and that mother's disgusting lover.

It was easy enough to catch the two young people in what is commonly called 'a compromising situation', and Wolfgang, unnerved by Thorwart's threats of denunciation to the Emperor, agreed to sign a document binding himself to marry Constanze within three years. 'If it should prove impossible for me to do so', this strange contract continued, 'owing to my changing my mind, then she shall be entitled to claim from me three hundred guilders a year.'

Who was this Constanze, I asked myself, for whom my brother had so hastily signed away his liberty?—and I began to study her. She is eighteen, and in comparison with all the other women Wolfgang has known, from the angelic Marianne to Aloysia herself, Constanze can only be described as insignificant. It would be an injustice to call her ugly or stupid or dowdy, yet even Wolfgang does not claim for her any great beauty or wit or charm. She has a pleasant figure, quite good sense, and it seems that she knows how to dress agreeably and simply. But she is capricious, coquettish and rather shallow. I could not understand how Wolfgang had become attracted to her, and I doubted whether he really loved her.

One day I took him aside and had a serious talk with him about the whole position. I said the contract was invalid, that it would never be acknowledged by any Law Court in the whole world, and that the

Emperor certainly had too many other problems to concern himself with the mischief-making of the scoundrelly Thorwart. Wolfgang had some misgivings: he spoke cautiously about his affection for the girl and then again of honour, obligation and a man's word. But I made it quite clear to him that the whole thing was a carefully planned little comedy in which the good Constanze had simply played the part assigned to her by her mother, and that even he, Wolfgang, had unwittingly acted just as he was expected to do.

He was already inclined to see the accuracy of my reasoning when our opponents, recognising the possibilities of a change in the situation, produced a brilliant and unexpected theatrical trick. A few days after Wolfgang had given his signature, as we were all sitting round the table after supper, Constanze suddenly asked for the infamous document. Frau Weber brought it, the girl stared at it intently and then gazed deep into Wolfgang's eyes: 'Dear, dear Mozart! I do not need any written assurance from you—I believe your word.' As she said it, she tore the paper into a hundred little pieces.

Not for a moment did I doubt that all this, just like the 'compromising situation', was a cunningly arranged scene, well rehearsed beforehand, intended to make the wavering suitor ashamed of his doubts and bring him back meekly to the fold. My naïve brother of course fell for it completely again, and this time, I fear, irrevocably.

'Heavenly girl!' he exclaimed in highest delight, walked towards Constanze, who stood there like a statue, and embraced her in passionate adoration. I was not surprised that the tears ran down the cheeks of Mama Weber, when she too embraced her future son-in-law.

This morning I knelt before my Emperor, and begged him graciously to grant 'the Application of the Imperial Royal Captain, Franz d'Yppold, for permission to conclude a marriage with Maria Anna Mozart, born in Salzburg'—this being the legend of the cold, impersonal document which carries the whole weight of my life's happiness or unhappiness.

The audience hall was full of applicants, not to speak of aides-de-camp, ministers and servants, so Joseph had no opportunity of talking to me informally as he might otherwise have wished. He looked at me for a long time, and then referred to the social obligations devolving on members of the Imperial War Council, and to the

strict but well-justified regulations governing the marriage of officers, designed to keep such officers' lives free from financial burdens and difficulties—stiff, unfeeling words, where I had expected one little gesture coming from the heart which could have set aside all obstacles.

'Do not lose hope completely', said the Emperor more kindly, seeing my despair. 'Governments have indeed no hearts, but perhaps they have something like a corporate brain. Give that brain time to consider your application.' I looked searchingly at Joseph, and he must have understood the silent question my eyes were asking him: How long? 'Give it a few months more', he said, 'half a year at most.'

Then, as he was turning to the next applicant, he seemed to remember something else he wished to tell me. 'Your brother, Mademoiselle', he added, 'will be pleased to learn that my Court Theatre has decided to accept his new opera, *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*.'

Salzburg, 8th August 1782

IN the wine-houses of Grinzing, in the drawing-rooms of the inner city, in the palaces of the high aristocracy and in the yards of tenement houses—in the whole of Vienna people are singing, whistling, humming nothing but the melodies from *Die Entführung*. 'If a sweetheart one has met with', sing the young couples as they stroll through the Prater hand in hand; 'Tortures may await me', hum the girls with an absent lover to long for; 'Ah! I loved him, was so happy', chant the serenaders in the little streets at night; and there are few glasses lifted in Vienna these days without somebody bursting into the toast of '*Vivat Bacchus*'. Osmin's droll sayings, like 'by the Prophet's beard I swear it' and 'I'll behead, then I'll hang thee', are constantly quoted by everyone from cobblers' apprentices right up to Prince Kaunitz, our Minister of State.

Papa and I have not yet been in Vienna to see the opera, but we have heard all about it from the Countess Lodron, who returned to Salzburg at the end of last month, having attended the first performance, and also seen it a second time. She was kind enough to tell me of her own admiration and to describe the immense enthusiasm

of the Viennese public. It had been performed ten times when the Countess left Vienna, and she says the theatre was crammed for each performance—despite an incident on the opening night which may, she fears, have done Wolfgang considerable harm.

To the great delight of the Viennese, Joseph II was seated in the Royal Box wearing a lilac-coloured coat adorned with all his orders and diamond stars. Behind him stood Signor Antonio Salieri, Court Kapellmeister and adviser to His Majesty on all questions of music. Signor Bonbonniere, as the Italian is known throughout Vienna because of his liking for sweetmeats, had arrived at the theatre with very mixed feelings: on the one hand he looked with disdain at everything on the stage which was not Italian; and on the other, since the leading part in *Il Seraglio*, as he insisted on calling it, was being sung by his mistress, the beautiful Catarina Cavalieri, he had a personal interest in the new opera's success.

Its success was pretty well decided directly after the first curtain went up, when fat Osmin sang his 'Trallalera', and the audience began to laugh. Nobody doubted that the evening would be a splendid triumph for the young composer, but at the end of the performance, when that triumph seemed assured, Wolfgang, perhaps intoxicated by the laughter and applause, committed his regrettable *sottise*. For Joseph II is exceedingly proud of the little he knows about music, and it would have been more prudent of Wolfgang to foster this pride instead of shaking it. (Had he not done the same many years ago in Schönbrunn when he took the fiddle out of the Crown Prince's hands and began to tune the E string?)

The Emperor left his box to congratulate Wolfgang. My brother bowed deeply, and Joseph added, perhaps half in jest but perhaps also to show himself the musical expert: 'Too fine for our ears, and a prodigious number of notes, my dear Mozart.' Instead of returning some light or non-committal answer to this not very serious criticism, Wolfgang was incensed, and replied with insolent frankness: 'Just as many notes, Your Majesty, as are necessary.'

'Possibly', observed the Emperor coldly. 'Doubtless you should know that better than I do.' Then he went away without a word of farewell, and could just be heard remarking to Salieri, who bowed very low: 'It was nothing out of the way, was it!' The gossips were delighted to retail this episode with due exaggerations; over night the story became a legend, and Wolfgang, who expected to read eloquent

eulogies of his work in the newspapers during the next days, had to be content with variations on the imperial 'nothing out of the way'. One critic even had the impertinence to write: 'Most of the music is purloined from other sources.'

It is true that crowds still flock to the Burgtheater, but at some performances there have even been boos, and aristocratic taste in Vienna now finds it fashionable to express slight disdain for the opera, in which they believe they are echoing the Emperor's own judgment. Thus has Wolfgang cheated himself of the full fruits of his success, while Signor Bonbonniere remains on the field victorious and still in possession of the imperial favour.

It seems then that *Die Entführung* is a popular, if not a critical, success, and that Wolfgang has done something completely original: he has written an opera for the people, one which ordinary folk understand because it speaks their language. (There is one person who would have been specially delighted to hear it, but who never will: our dear Christian Bach died in London early this year.)

Just as in *Idomeneo* I could guess at the deep inner experiences behind the beautiful score, so today also I believe I can detect the hidden sources of my brother's inspiration: he has somehow transplanted to the opera stage the atmosphere from the 'Eye of God'. Indeed the coincidence of the two Constances seems to have exercised a powerful effect on Wolfgang's mind as well as on his music: the insignificant real one and the beautiful, noble and gentle one of the opera have merged for him into a single perfect creature; and the more glorious the melodies he heaped on the opera-Constanze, the more he came to love an imperfect Constanze Weber.

Four days ago Wolfgang and Constanze were married. They wept as they stood before the altar newly united, and at this Mama Weber, Cousin Thorwart and even the priest were so moved that they began weeping too—witnesses to the emotion of two young hearts. After the wedding there was a small supper, the health of the bride and groom was drunk in champagne, and their future plans were discussed. They will be moving into a house called 'The Red Sabre' on the Hohe Brücke, the very same house where we stayed fourteen years ago and in which Dr Mesmer had commissioned Wolfgang to write *Bastien and Bastienne*.

When he received the news of the wedding, Papa broke down. It seemed to him that the great plan of his life, designed with so much loving care and thought, had finally collapsed like a house of cards. Despite the success of *Die Entführung*, the old man was convinced that Wolfgang could not reach his full stature with Constanze at his side; she could never give him the wise guidance and inspiration which Papa had hoped for from Wolfgang's wife.

For weeks beforehand Wolfgang had been begging Papa to give his blessing. 'I need this', he wrote, 'for my own honour and the girl's, for my whole health and peace of mind. Whoever gets a wife like my Constanze will be a happy man.' I added my own pleas, telling Papa repeatedly that since Wolfgang's mind was clearly made up, the wisest thing would be to accept that and to give the couple his blessing.

For a long while he remained hard and unyielding, but I persevered with my pleading, even after it seemed useless, and perhaps partly for my sake (because he knew of my own unhappiness) he relented. Three days ago he appeared at the breakfast table, took an envelope out of his pocket, and said, without looking up from his plate: 'Here you are, I've written to Wolfgang. I've given him my blessing to marry the girl.' I ran to the mail coach, and presented the coachman with a few kreutzers as an inducement to deliver the letter to my brother in Vienna as quickly as possible.

It was too late. The wedding had taken place the day before the letter was sent, and for better or worse Constanze is Wolfgang's wife. They would like to visit us soon in Salzburg, Wolfgang writes, 'and I wager, dearest father—I wager—that you will rejoice in my happiness when you get to know my Constanze, that is, if you agree with me that a good-hearted, honest, virtuous and amiable wife is a blessing to her husband.'

Papa and I have often discussed the reasons why Wolfgang should have wished to marry what I consider rather an insignificant and shallow character like Constanze. He insists it is the old story: they did not give Wolfgang the girl he wanted, so he wanted the girl they gave him; he was taking her as Aloysia's sister. Then there was the dastardly intrigue of Thorwart and Mama Weber, and to crown it all, the confusion in Wolfgang's mind between the two Constanzes; but I still think there is more to it than any of that. In fact, I am quite certain that Wolfgang really loves his bride—differently, no doubt,

from the way he loved Marianne Gluck or Louisa Lodron or Aloysia—but he really loves her and is convinced they will find happiness together. I know Constanze, as Papa so far does not, and I know that she is very young and unformed. But so, in many ways, is my brother; and their happiness or the reverse will depend not only on what Wolfgang makes out of her, but also on what she makes out of him.

Last month my beloved Franz received the reply to his application:

‘I am directed to state that the Imperial War Council, after thoroughly examining the applicant’s petition in every aspect and after careful consultation of the entire matter with all interested Ministries of State and in particular with His Majesty’s Imperial Chancellory, has now come to the final and irrevocable decision that it must necessarily refuse the required permission for a marriage of the Imperial Royal Captain Franz d’Yppold to Anna Maria Mozart born in Salzburg; this refusal is issued in accordance with the explicit regulations which concern the conclusion of a marriage by any member of the Imperial Royal Corps of Officers.’

Franz handed me the document without saying a word, and watched me while I read it. My eyes flew over the flowery writing, and for the first shocked seconds I could not grasp the sense of that mass of verbiage, that one forbidding long sentence. ‘Final and irrevocable’, I murmured; ‘must refuse the required permission. . . . In plain language the Emperor has said “No”. Is that it?’

Franz nodded, and still did not speak. My brain worked furiously, but I was half prepared for this situation, I had planned for it long ago, and I knew what I had to do. It was unthinkable that I should live with him for ever as his mistress, but I knew that at any moment he would start talking of his resignation from the Army and how we should face life together from then on as man and wife. It would be no empty gesture which I could refuse hastily, but the true and honourable expression of a deeply chivalrous nature: because he loved me, not even the Oath of Service to his Emperor would be allowed to stand between him and our wedding.

But that way lay disaster, sooner for him, because of the wreckage of his career, and only a little later for me because I should know I had caused that wreckage. However carefully I had rehearsed my part, hoping I should never need to speak it, now that the moment had come, it seemed the most difficult in my life. I had to give up

finally and irrevocably—in the words of that grim document—my most cherished hope for a joyful future; indeed for any future at all.

So I told Franz there and then that two and a half years of waiting had proved too long for me, that my love had grown cold, that even if he wished it I could never be tied to an old and impoverished former officer—and many similar things which I had read in romantic novels or heard on the stage in tearful melodramas. Whether he believed me, or whether he saw through my subterfuge, I shall never be sure. At any rate he did not try to argue, but asked if he might embrace me for the last time; and when I had suffered this with my heart breaking, he departed.

A few days ago he left Salzburg. The Emperor had promoted him to the rank of colonel, and he joined his regiment, somewhere far away in Galizia, near the Russian border. Just as he came into my life, quietly, kindly, gently, so now he goes out of it: he has gone out of our house, out of the town, but never, never, out of my heart.

I am thirty-one, alone, empty, and the three dearest desires of my life have remained unsatisfied. I did not win fame as a great adult virtuoso; the fine hopes I placed on the recognition of my brother's genius have only been fulfilled in very limited measure; and I shall now never know the happiness of marriage to the man whom I loved truly and who returned that love.

But my life goes on, always in the same rhythm, slow, monotonous, sad: Papa, Teresa, an occasional visitor, taking little Bimpy for walks. Breakfast, dinner, supper. Giving lessons, running the household, daydreaming of lost Franz, futile comfortless tears. . . .

BOOK THREE

28th October 1783—7th December 1791

Salzburg, 28th October 1783

AT the end of July Wolfgang and Constanze came to stay with us. It was beautiful weather, and Salzburg was looking its gayest. Wolfgang had been singing his wife's praises in every letter he wrote, and both of them were so eager to have her accepted into the family circle that Papa, sincerely touched, seemed ready to take Constanze to his heart as if she were his own daughter. Everything was done to give them a festive reception. Teresa and I had for days been busy baking and preparing special dishes. Bimpy, newly trimmed and beautified by a fine red silken collar, barked furiously in anticipation. Andreas Schachtner had designed a coloured poster with great artistry, and, framed in garlands, it hung over the front door of our house, bearing the inscription: WELCOME HOME WOLFGANG AND CONSTANZE.

Our joy in their arrival was marred a little because they had not brought Baby Raimund. He was born in June, and Papa was naturally bursting with eagerness to see his first grandchild who, according to Wolfgang, looked a true Mozart. They had put him out to nurse in the country near Vienna, and when Papa mildly remarked that a child of such a tender age should not be parted so long from its mother, Constanze answered that this was a most old-fashioned viewpoint, confined to places like Salzburg.

'In Vienna', she informed us, with an air of condescension I found very irritating, 'people believe it is better for a babe at arms, and also for its mother, that they do not become so closely attached that they may never be separated. Besides, the new surroundings would have disturbed the little one, and a coach journey of so many days might

well have been too much for him. No', she concluded, 'I assure you he is very well looked after where he is.'

It was a cruel, tactless way to answer, and I admired Papa's self-control when he did not pursue the subject. I could see that Wolfgang was a little uneasy, as if he suspected that something was amiss. As a rule Constanze could not do or say anything wrong in his eyes, and the more I studied my sister-in-law in the next weeks, the more surprising I found this.

Certainly she knew how to dress well, and she had become truly elegant. She had quantities of hats and gloves, and wore a great number of beads, rings, little chains, and other jewellery. It took her hours in the morning to complete her toilet, but I do not blame her too harshly for being a vain young woman who likes to be admired: that is normal enough.

Although she dressed elegantly, I soon found she was a thorough slattern. Shoes, stockings, brushes, combs, powder-puffs, bags and jewellery were littered about the room along with some of Wolfgang's music manuscripts, his own clothes, the remains of pastries and sweetmeats, and much else besides. Teresa soon abandoned her efforts to reduce the room to any sort of order.

Such negligence is perhaps no very grave fault, and what I found far less pardonable in Constanze was her behaviour towards Teresa. She kept her running to and fro on a variety of trivial errands, without ever a friendly word of appreciation. Teresa is a simple, devoted soul, who never grudges any amount of work, and she has been with us now for nearly twenty years. This is the first time one of the Mozarts has treated her as a mere servant instead of practically a member of the family.

I must admit that in other ways Constanze seemed as anxious as ever to win my favour. Sometimes when I complimented her on one of her hats or dresses, she would at once offer to make me a present of it, but I suspected that acceptance on my part would not have been too welcome.

For Wolfgang she was perfection itself. I remember when he and I were walking home from the weekly market one day, he went into rhapsodies on the happiness he had found, on Constanze's beauty and charms, on how greatly everyone admired her. 'Even the Emperor', he informed me proudly.

'The Emperor?' I asked in surprise; upon which he recounted a

tale of the first weeks of their marriage. Strolling through the Prater in frolicsome mood, they suddenly dropped into a scene from *Il Seraglio*. 'I am the master and you the slave', exclaimed Wolfgang in the role of Osmin. 'I command and you obey!'

'I your slave?' Constanze returned, just as she had heard it from Blonda in the opera. 'Say that once more! I am free-born . . .'

'Poison and daggers!'—*fortissimo* from Wolfgang-Osmin—'she makes me furious. Do you know that I can beat you?'

'Do not dare touch me', screamed Constanze-Blonda. Neither of them noticed an officer in green uniform who had come up behind them. He interrupted the little scene: 'Well, well, Mozart, only a month married, and quarrelling already? A little early, don't you think?'

It was Joseph II. 'Of course', admitted Wolfgang, 'we were both flabbergasted at first. Then we realised what had happened, and laughingly we explained to the Emperor all about our "quarrel". His Majesty laughed too, and wished us every happiness for the future, saying to my dear little Stanzi: "I am delighted to have met our charming Madame Lange's most charming sister." With that he kissed her hand and left us.'

Before we got home I seized the opportunity to ask Wolfgang, in a light, chaffing way: 'And Aloysia?'

He turned, surprised. 'What do you mean?'

'Come now, brother o'mine, as your friend Schikaneder used to say. Surely you were once, to say the least, extremely fond of Aloysia. Do you see her sometimes?'

'Why, yes, we see each other. She is my sister-in-law, after all. We gave a concert together in March; and Aloysia has been to our house to see little Raimund.'

'And otherwise?'

'Otherwise—she is a celebrated prima donna, favourite of the Emperor—and all that you ask about is forgotten.' His voice sounded in no way artificial, and I decided that at least in his feelings for Constanze he had finally got over Aloysia.

Not so Constanze herself: I felt she was secretly jealous of her sister's success. Aloysia possessed everything a woman could wish for, while she, Constanze, was at best admired as the wife of the composer of *Il Seraglio*. Josepha, her eldest sister, had lately joined a provincial opera company and Constanze believed she herself

might also forge a fine career as a great singer. Unfortunately she possessed little talent or voice, and Wolfgang, who should have known better than to encourage her, spent hours with her at the piano, trying to improve both.

Flattered by his patient instruction, she insisted on performing in public. Our hen-pecked husband therefore went off to Michael Haydn, and persuaded him, as the organist of St Peter's Church, to let Constanze sing the soprano solo in the following Sunday's Solemn Mass. So the congregation had the painful experience of listening to the poor girl straining and squeaking in her efforts to reach the top notes; until Michael, in despair, pulled out all the registers of his organ, stamped on the pedals, and succeeded in crowning the soprano in a sea of *fortissimo* organ music.

After the service, when we usually stand outside the church and chat for a little, all our friends seemed in a great hurry, and in their clear desire not to embarrass us, departed with a rather summary 'Grüss Gott'. Constanze noticed nothing and she obviously believed that St Peter's had never before heard such beautiful singing. Wolfgang was prepared to confirm her opinion. I knew love was supposed to make people blind, but until now I had not realised that it can also make them deaf.

Michael Haydn was the only person in Salzburg who could induce Wolfgang to forsake his dear Stanzi for a few hours. There were hilarious nights when my brother would join Michael, Lipp and Spitzeder in the wine-cellar of St Peter's, where they diverted themselves with Michael's own particular invention: male four-part singing. Of course men have sung together in harmony before, but nobody before Michael has carefully worked out the separate parts so that they may be written down just like the parts of a string quartet. At any rate the four revellers went on drinking and trying out new ideas for their harmony, and perhaps many men in German lands may one day delight in this combination of drinking and singing. . . .

One incident in which the four of them were involved caused us all great amusement. Our Prince-Archbishop is very proud of his violin-playing, in which Michael has to accompany him; and several months earlier he had ordered Michael to compose a series of violin duets suitable for intimate court concerts. Again and again, on the flimsiest of excuses, Michael tried to postpone composition, until in the end Colloredo lost his patience. 'By six o'clock four Sundays

from now', he shouted, 'you will have those duets ready, eh, or else you are discharged, d'you understand ?'

Michael understood, and set to work, though with great reluctance. Ideas for the duets refused to flow, and it was not till the eve of the date assigned to him that he had them finally set down on paper: on that Saturday evening he arrived at our house beaming with satisfaction.

'Well, I've finished the stuff at last', he announced in a voice which was already a little slurred, and threw the still wet manuscript paper down on the table. 'So that's that, and now I've come to fetch young Wolfgang, to celebrate my release in suitable Saturnalian style. Tonight, we must get drunk to the very limits of our capacity—and then far beyond. Tonight there shall be such a souse as Salzburg in all its twelve centuries has never seen before. To the pot-houses, Wolferl! *Vivat Bacchus*, my lusty lad, *vivat quam maxime Bacchus!*'

He wrapped the manuscript again in its paper cover, grasped it firmly with one hand, and with the other dragged a mildly resisting Wolfgang to the front door, outside which Lipp and Spitzeder were eagerly waiting.

I believe there are about a hundred beer and wine houses in Salzburg, and the four men must have drunk in at least fifty of them during the night. About six in the morning—the sun had already risen—the quartet decided to stagger homewards. However, as the other three lived in the old part of the town, they all remained for a while on the bridge over the Salzach, to bid Wolfgang a proper farewell. They sang *fortissimo* a four-part canon which Michael himself conducted with the rolled-up manuscript of the Archbishop's violin duets. The echo of the last chord sounded out far away in the mountains, and Michael embraced Wolfgang as if he were not to see him again for many years. Lipp and Spitzeder did the same, and as Wolfgang turned to leave them, Michael lifted the rolled manuscript above his head in a dramatic if unsteady gesture of farewell. He stumbled and fell. The paper slipped out of his hands, fluttered over the parapet and down into the depths of the rushing Salzach far below.

Next morning, with his head aching violently from the night's carouse, Michael came to Hannibal Square in utter despair. His audience with the Archbishop was in a few hours' time, and he had

no music. There was only one thing to do: Wolfgang must immediately compose a set of duets which at six that evening Michael could offer to Colloredo as his own. 'Nothing easier', replied Wolfgang calmly. 'Where's my quill?'—and in a few minutes he was seated at his writing desk, absorbed in composition.

That evening Michael returned to thank Wolfgang.

'Well, Michael', asked Wolfgang, 'what did your Prince say?'

'Not much', replied Michael. 'He stared at me searchingly for a few moments, then took the manuscript and looked through it. "Not bad, eh, Haydn", he murmured. "Really by no means bad. Only . . ."—I saw him beginning to smile—"only, wouldn't you agree? . . . a trifle Mozartian in style." Then, with an abrupt change of tone, "Out you go, eh."'

I have never heard my father laugh so much as when he heard this Archi-Episcopal comment.

Michael's reference to 'twelve centuries' brings me to a subject in which I ought to take more interest than I do. Last year the twelfth centenary of the Bishopric of Salzburg was celebrated with great pomp. The town was full of strangers, most of whom needed lodgings.

One day a portly gentleman of about fifty appeared at our house with a letter of introduction from Uncle Hagenauer, who is his banker, and who later told us what a wealthy man our visitor was. Baron Johann Baptist von Berchtold zu Sonnenburg (to give him his full title) asked if we could let him have a room for the duration of the festivities. Papa, pleased about the extra money it would bring in, gladly agreed; whereupon the Baron began a two months' sojourn with us.

Like our dear Mama's father, he is a magistrate. Curiously enough, he too comes from St Gilgen on Lake Wolfgang, and lives in the same house where Mama was born. I think this may have aroused in Papa a certain sentimental interest towards him, but he made little impression on me.

I was rather surprised when he came to visit us again last spring, and then in July, for my name-day, he brought us two large baskets of cherries and apricots from his estate. This staid severe widower with a couple of adult children might almost have been beginning to court me.

I can see the way Papa's mind is turning, and I am sure that he and

Wolfgang have discussed Berchtold as a possible husband for me. One or two discreet suggestions my brother made showed that he too would like to see me 'provided for'. It is a matter of indifference to me: since Franz went away, my life has drifted on aimlessly like a log of wood on a mountain river. I feel no power within me which might stop this drifting.'

Sometimes I feel I am living largely in memories of the past. When I see Wolfgang as a married man I think back to that little brother for whom I had to draw a map of his fairy kingdom, as well as wash his neck and put on his nightshirt. And then I remember those later years when many a night he would sit at my bedside and tell me things he would not dare confide to anybody else.

Well, he has not altogether ceased to be that same little brother, for when he returned to Salzburg, he took quite a boyish interest in the lives of our old friends. He was delighted to hear that Ursula's husband, the banker and town councillor Haffner, had been ennobled by the Emperor, and when he learnt that Andreas Schachtner's nerves were as frayed as ever by Sally Joly's incessant giggling, it was the old mischievous Wolferl who mimicked poor Andreas' distress.

Yet at times I saw clearly how much the married Wolfgang Mozart was living completely in the present. One day Papa received a black-bordered letter from Baron Grimm in Paris: Madame d'Épinay, the 'eagle in a cage of gauze', had died. She who had always sought happiness, but remained a deeply unhappy woman, had been good to Wolfgang in the hour of his worst despair; and I thought I would break the news gently to him. 'Madame d'Épinay?' he said, almost as if he had difficulty in remembering the name. 'How very long ago all that seems, Nannerl!'

Everything 'before Constanze' seemed to him very long ago, and certainly their first year of married life has been an exceedingly full one. After the success of *Il Seraglio* 'young Mozart' was much in demand in the houses of the Viennese aristocracy. He earned high fees as a music-master and was often asked to take part in private concerts.

'And what about further commissions for operas?' Papa asked very early in their stay.

'They will come, dearest father', replied Wolfgang, 'just as sure as the amen in a prayer.'

'And until then?' said Papa.

‘Until then’, put in Constanze with a smile, ‘why, we shall continue going to splendid parties and masked balls, besides entertaining guests ourselves’, an observation that did not seem to satisfy my father.

Another time Wolfgang told us about Gluck, and how kind the old master always is to him. Gluck, now almost seventy but as active as ever, still composes, replies personally to all letters, administers his extensive property, and has visitors to his table nearly every day. He eats and drinks too much, and a few months ago had a stroke, from which however he recovered quickly because of his robust constitution.

One day Wolfgang and Constanze were invited to lunch at the Glucks, together with Signor Salieri and his beautiful mistress, Catarina Cavalieri—who, despite her Italian name, is pure Viennese and the daughter of a suburban schoolmaster, Herr Kavalier. Why she should have thrown in her lot with the sour and sullen, sweet-meat-munching Salieri, is a mystery; but the longer I live, the less I understand the curious attachments which may develop between men and women.

Catarina was proud of having sung the part of Constanze in the first performance of *Il Seraglio*, which she called her ‘heart’s child’, and Gluck too was eloquent in his admiration for the opera. Everyone was much impressed that performances of it had been given outside Vienna with great acclamation, and it had created something of a ‘Mozart vogue’ in music-loving Prague. The enthusiasm shown by Catarina and his host compelled poor Signor Bonbonniere to say a few friendly words about the opera himself, which doubtless went much against the grain.

Salieri soon turned the conversation to an oratorio he was writing called *The Last Judgment*. ‘I am much in doubt’, he remarked to Gluck, ‘as to whether I shall have Our Lord’s words sung by a tenor or a baritone. Which voice, revered Maestro, would in your opinion be the more fitting to Our Saviour’s musical portrayal?’

Gluck emptied his wine-glass with great gusto and remarked with an impish smile, ‘If I continue eating and drinking as I am doing at present, Salieri, give me a few months and I may be able to answer your question from personal experience.’

Salieri can hardly have enjoyed this jest on the serious subject of his oratorio, but he contributed a grudging smile to the general

mirth, in which Wolfgang laughed loudest of all. Yet my naïve brother deemed it opportune a few minutes later to appeal to his rival's good-will! The post of music-master to the imperial household had recently fallen vacant, and it was Salieri's duty, as Court Kapellmeister, to make recommendations. Wolfgang actually asked Salieri to recommend *him*, giving the Italian the chance to reply with a complacent smile: 'What a pity you did not apply to me a few days earlier, my young colleague! Unfortunately I made my suggestions to the Emperor only yesterday. A very great pity. Perhaps another time. . . .'

Dear Heavens—will Wolfgang never learn? Was that supercilious Grimm right after all in wishing my brother 'had only half as much talent and twice as much wisdom and tact'?

It was only a few days after the episode with Haydn and the violin duets that we heard the terrible news in a letter from Constanze's mother: little Raimund, hardly three months old, had died of scarlet fever. He had been buried very quietly, and Frau Weber suggested by way of consolation that since so delicate a child could never have lived long, Wolfgang and Constanze should look upon it as a merciful release.

We were all so horrified by the news that none of us could say a word. Constanze walked unsteadily out of the room and went upstairs. Wolfgang followed her, and I could hear him knocking at the door of their room; but she had locked herself in. He came down again, looking very haggard, and ran out of the house. He did not return till late in the evening, and for the next few days both he and Constanze stayed in their room almost all the time. Meanwhile I was nursing Papa in bed, for he had broken down completely. He would not have any daylight let into the room, the curtains must be kept tightly drawn; and a dark cloud of sorrow seemed to lie over the whole house.

The storm broke a week later, when Papa came downstairs and demanded to see his son and daughter-in-law. 'So in Vienna', he shouted at Constanze, 'they let the little children perish, throw them into their little graves, and there's an end.'

Wolfgang tried to silence him: 'Papa—please consider a mother's feelings.'

'Mother? A murderess! A child murderess who ought to be

pilloried. She and her clan, it is they who have brought all the world's sorrows on the heads of us Mozarts. And now this—this!

Constanze stood there deathly pale. 'You vicious old man!' she burst out in a cruel, shrill voice. 'Who are you to dare to speak like that? You who have made a misery out of your son's life since the day he was born. Happy little Raimund—he at least was spared the fate his poor father has had to endure throughout his life: to be exploited by a miserly old hawk. And why—why? Because of all this useless, worthless, dirty old rubbish and lumber here.'

She strode towards the sideboard where all the souvenirs of our past were ranged: rings, snuff-boxes, goblets, crystal glasses, china plates with gold borders, silver buckles, sabres, watches, lace handkerchiefs. With a single wild gesture she swept everything to the floor, presents from kings and emperors, princes and bishops, memories of splendid hours and triumphs such as very few mortals have ever enjoyed. She stamped and jumped on them in a mad fury of destruction, till everything lay beneath her feet in fragments or shreds. Then her rage seemed abruptly to burn out, she collapsed in Wolfgang's arms, and he took her up to their room.

I do not know how many weeks we have lived through since then in a cold, silent, hostile atmosphere. Every morning I woke up telling myself that all this could not have happened, it was simply a bad dream. Every night I would go to sleep longing to forget the bitterness and hatred between my father and my brother's wife. They did not meet often, for Constanze barely left her room till the evening, when she wandered round alone in the dark streets. Wolfgang spent more time than ever in Michael Haydn's company, so we saw little of him either. I was left alone with Papa, and it was as if Wolfgang and his wife had already returned to Vienna.

But in fact they left only yesterday. Papa scarcely shook hands with Constanze, and all our leave-takings had an embarrassed perfunctory quality. The wounds inflicted on that day of recriminations were unhealed, and there was not much that any of us could say to each other from the heart. The ghost of little Raimund stood between all of us: poor little Raimund, who had to die so that my father should hear something he has been afraid to hear all his life.

Salzburg, 23rd August 1784

TOMORROW afternoon at half past three I shall kneel before the altar with the man of my choice; Father Dominicus will marry us and bless our union. Papa will be standing behind me, a tired, lonely, grey old man, with Uncle Hagenauer and the Abbé Bullinger on his left and right. Michael Haydn will be at the organ, and in my mind I can hear it swelling mightily as the choir sings the *Te Deum* from that glorious Mass which Wolfgang composed five years ago for the Coronation of the Virgin.

All our oldest and best friends will be coming to see me married, and I rejoice especially to think of my three best friends of girlhood watching me in the church. Sally will perhaps be sad for once, and in no humour for giggling, finding herself the only one of the four who is not yet married. Ursula Haffner will look proudly on her sweet little boy, nine-year-old Benedict; and he will be holding the hand of a golden-haired girl three years his junior—Elizabeth, the daughter of Resi Molk. For it is many months now since the estrangement between Resi and myself was ended, and of course she will be there too. Somewhere in a corner at the back of the church my good Teresa will lean on a column and weep softly, because I am now leaving her after all these years. We have lived together in the same house. Indeed I shall miss her greatly, but naturally she must stay and look after Papa.

Wolfgang—will not be there. Constanze, being in her ninth month with child, is of course unable to come, and he would not leave her on her own. 'My wife and I wish you all joy and happiness in your change of state', he writes, 'and are heartily sorry we cannot be present at your wedding.' He sends 'a thousand good wishes from Vienna to Salzburg', and hopes particularly 'that you two will live together as harmoniously as—we two!' There follows some humorous verse about the matrimonial state quite in Wolfgang's old playful style; and with that I must be content. I understand his not coming to the wedding, yet I keenly regret his absence.

I was touched to have received fine presents not only from friends

like the Countess Lodron—and, by the way, from the Archbishop!—but also from people who are little more than acquaintances and yet seem to wish me well. I can imagine the apothecary, old Herr Reifenhstahl, saying: 'So dear Fräulein Nannerl has found a man in the end.' Herr Zeni, our grocer, will nod wistfully: 'Yes, and it feels like only yesterday when I ran to the coach and gave her some raspberry sweetmeats—you know, when they all went off into the great world, many years ago.' And some Salzburgers will think also of a lonely grave in Paris, and say a prayer for the soul of my mother.

After the ceremony we shall all go to my husband's house—my house from that moment—and I shall drink a glass of wine with my old friends who are saying goodbye to the Nannerl Mozart they have known. Then they will leave me, and I shall begin my new life as the Baroness Maria Anna von Berchtold zu Sonnenburg.

All this year Berchtold has been courting me—strange that I can never think of him as Johann or anything but plain Berchtold. Perhaps courting is the wrong word, but at least he became very considerate, and showed me as much tenderness, I believe, as is possible for a man of his reserved and cold disposition. I cannot say that I love him, and I do not think he loves me. But I presume that a man with his position is not expected to remain without a wife, and I soon saw that he was resolved on a *mariage de convenance* if I would have him. This made me reflect earnestly about my whole situation.

Papa is becoming moody and querulous, and though he is in reasonable health for his age, he has grown rather frail, and one cannot say how much longer he has to live. It would plainly have been my duty to stay in Salzburg and look after him in his declining years, had he not shown his sincere desire this time to see me married. At thirty-three I could not be sanguine of having many further offers for my hand, and although I was little tempted by the prospect of becoming a Baroness, this seemed the only chance of any future for me at all but that of a soured old maid. I decided that when Berchtold proposed I would accept him; but only after I had told him about Franz.

Everything! I did not wish to start our marriage with a lie, nor did I wish him to find out one day from others, and reproach me. He listened in silence to all that I told him, and I was heartened by his quiet, dignified attitude in that difficult hour. It may be a good sign

that I am now to be mistress of the very house where my mother was born, where she lived till the day of her marriage. Tomorrow when we drive out of Salzburg, along the lovely mountain road which leads to Lake Wolfgang, past the charming little village of Hof, and the deep blue waters of Lake Fuschl, I shall vow to myself to do everything in my power, with God's grace, to make our life together a pleasant and a serene one.

How is it that just tonight, on my wedding eve, I cannot stop thinking of Bäsle? Last February she gave birth to a daughter, out of wedlock, who was baptised in the name of Maria Josepha Mozart. Though everybody in Augsburg must know of Bäsle's relations with Wolfgang's prebendary friend Reibald, she steadfastly refuses to acknowledge him as the father. 'Like myself', she wrote to me, 'the little girl should be proud to bear the name of Mozart.'

To me this shows a greatness of heart which I admire most sincerely. Two years ago, in the decisive moment of my life, I renounced my love, believing this was the right thing to do. Today I wonder whether true courage would not have dictated a different course: to marry Franz, even though it meant his leaving the army, and to start a new life together, the happiness of which could have rested securely on the rock of our love alone. Bäsle will remain a Mozart all her life, but I shall wed tomorrow because I did not wish to be still a Mozart in my old age.

Perhaps one day I shall forget Franz—I do not know. But I know that my love for him will for ever slumber deep in my heart.

St Gilgen, beginning of May 1785

BEFORE me, shimmering in the sunshine, lie the greenish-blue waters of Lake Wolfgang, guarded on all sides by mountains still snow-capped. The air is crisp and bracing, and so clear that I can see the villages of St Wolfgang and Strobl far in the distance right at the other end of the lake. The surrounding forests give off a glorious tang, which mingles with the sweet perfume of the young lilac blooming in the garden near me. I sit on the terrace of

our house and watch children on the shore in front of me, shouting and playing.

As I look at them, I rejoice, for in a few weeks' time my own child will be born. I have a strong feeling that it will be a boy, but whether boy or girl, this child shall have all the love that is in my heart to give. Perhaps too he will bring into the house that peace and serenity to which before my wedding I pledged myself.

For although it is a melancholy thing to say, my husband and I, nearly a year after our marriage, are almost as much strangers as ever. There cannot be peace and serenity between us, when there is so little personal relationship at all. We do not quarrel and then find joy in reconciliation, since it is hard even to quarrel with Berchtold. He lays down the law in a quiet firm voice whenever he deems it necessary, and somehow it becomes unthinkable to oppose his wishes.

All that he requires of me is that I manage the household conscientiously, and act as hostess to the local gentry or any important visitors he may need to entertain. Perhaps I might come closer to him if he would talk to me sometimes about his work, but he is not a person to discuss serious matters with a woman, even when the woman is his wife. So although I know his habits, his insistence on the punctuality of meals, the dishes he prefers, his industry in dealing with the problems of the village, I am wholly ignorant of what is in his heart.

For his part, now that he is accustomed to my presence, he takes little more notice of me than he does of the servants—or the furniture. He has never invited Wolfgang and Constanze to stay with us, and Wolfgang as a musician means nothing to him, for he is quite indifferent to music and the arts. There are times, however, when being the brother-in-law of an outstanding young composer confers an additional prestige on Berchtold, so that he experiences a fleeting pride in being connected with the Mozarts.

It was a great day for Salzburg last November when, for the first time in our city too, the gay C-major chords sounded forth at the beginning of the overture to Wolfgang's *Seraglio*. Michael Haydn was at the piano in the orchestra, and immediately behind the orchestra a sort of throne had been placed for the Prince-Archbishop. The whole of Salzburg seemed to be in the theatre, and as we made our way to our seats at the end of the front row of the stalls, we

acknowledged greetings from the Haffners, Hagenauers, Mölks, and I smiled at the Countess Antonia Lodron, who had her egregious brother Arco next to her. (Wolfgang still owes *him* a kick on the behind!)

Sally Joly, by now less the Countess' chambermaid than her faithful companion, was sitting with Andreas Schachtner. He was taking an evening off from the orchestra, and had reluctantly agreed to escort her at my particular request—'though I don't know how I shall endure it', he grumbled, 'if she goes on laughing all the time.' Berchtold, Papa and I were accompanied by good old Bullinger, who unfortunately is soon leaving Salzburg to settle in Munich, and also by our dear maid Teresa. It must have been one of the proudest evenings in her life 'to hear Master Wolfgang's famous opera'.

I was concentrating intently on the performance, determined to savour fully every bar of the music, when I found my eyes drawn away to the cold grey figure in a lilac-coloured bishop's robe seated right in front of the audience. From where we were sitting I had a clear view of his profile, and nothing in that face gave any indication of his emotions. Impassively he stared in front of him like a waxen image, and while others were laughing, or applauding, he gave no sign of pleasure and his hands remained motionless upon his soutane.

When he left the theatre at the end of the opera, the audience rose respectfully. Colloredo stopped in front of us, and I wondered whether he would drop his mask of severity, caused no doubt by resentment at his former servant's triumph. But his features were unchanged, and he scarcely looked at Papa when he pronounced his verdict in a low harsh voice: 'Not bad at all, eh, Herr Vize-Kapellmeister?'

'Very gracious of him, Nannerl', murmured Papa as Colloredo stalked out of the hall. I could hardly believe my ears: my poor father had taken this faint praise as a splendid compliment!

When I wrote just now of the Mölks watching the *Seraglio*, my eyes filled with tears; for that occasion was almost the last time I saw them. It has been an extremely severe winter and spring, in which ice and snow were followed by nearly continuous rain. The Salzach left its banks and flooded the town. Some of the old houses, which had long been insecure in their foundations, began to shake dangerously, and on 2nd April, during divine service, the old parish

church and some houses near it collapsed. Many persons were injured and eleven lost their lives, amongst them Pepi and Resi Mölk. They were found under the rubble with bodies so disfigured as to be hardly recognisable. Their hands were still tightly clasped together.

At the funeral poor little seven-year-old Elizabeth stood with her grandfather, Dr Barisani, and although she was weeping she was too young to understand her tragic plight. And I, as I wept with her, was burying a thousand bitter-sweet memories—of my friendship with Resi, my one-time love of Pepi, and Wolfgang's passionate embraces with Resi beneath the trees of Hellbrunn. Tears and laughter, delights and disillusion, all were now interred under the ruins of an old church.

But I will turn to more cheerful thoughts. Papa has been staying with us, and before that he was two months with Wolfgang and Constanze in Vienna. 'From now on', he told me, 'I shall travel more. It is very good for me, you know. One sees new people, hears different views, one's fellow-men show one a new respect. And why should I not travel at my age, Nannerl? After all', he laughed, 'I'm only sixty-six.'

I noticed that he had begun to be careful again about the way he dressed, that he laughed more than for many years, and when we had company, he often led the conversation with great vivacity. The weeks in Vienna have restored his self-confidence, and everything which occurred there must have contributed to this effect: his immense delight in Wolfgang's son Karl, now eight months old, his reconciliation with Constanze, and perhaps most of all, the recognition accorded to Wolfgang, which allows my brother and his wife to live in very comfortable circumstances.

According to Papa, they spend money lavishly, but can afford it. Wolfgang rides every morning on his own horse, and also plays a great deal of billiards. His clothes are impeccably cut, but then he makes so many public appearances that this elegance, which lends him an air of great distinction, is a professional necessity. The aristocratic houses consider it an honour to pay him handsomely for taking part in their private concerts, and he earns excellent fees for the piano lessons which he gives to a few selected pupils. Altogether, Papa avers, he should be able to lodge at least two thousand guilders in his bank.

'Wolfgang must lead an extremely strenuous life', I observed. We were sitting out on the terrace, and with the quiet landscape of lake and forest around us I found it hard to imagine the bustle of Vienna.

'Almost too strenuous for me', agreed Papa with a smile. 'Why, we hardly ever got to bed before one, and every day there were these concerts and recitals, teaching, composing and so forth. It is fortunate that your brother works very quickly when he needs to do so.'

'How about his compositions, then?' I asked.

'Ah, Nannerl!' Papa looked at me eagerly. 'He has written a piano concerto lately, a symphony, a Mass, chamber music, string quartets. Yes, and that reminds me of the great Kapellmeister Joseph Haydn, who is Wolfgang's loyal friend and admirer.'

'So friendships between musicians *are* possible, Papa', I chaffed him gently.

'Certainly', he replied. 'Or at least if they are men of character and integrity, like Haydn and Mozart.' It was comical yet touching to hear him pronounce the name of Mozart so impersonally, as if he were referring to a renowned maestro instead of to his own son.

He told me about the evening 'Papa' Haydn came to the Mozarts' apartment to hear Wolfgang's new string quartets. Haydn sat listening intently, occasionally putting his hand to his ear so that he should not miss a single note. After the final chord had sounded, he rose and walked over to Papa, saying, as he seized my father's hand: 'Before God, Herr Kapellmeister, and as an honest man, I tell you that your son is the greatest composer whom I know in person or by name. He has magnificent taste and the most profound knowledge of composition.'

Papa looked at me proudly as if to say: 'Haven't I been preaching that same gospel all my life?' But instead he repeated musingly: 'Before God and as an honest man. . . . Wasn't there another verdict on our Wolfgang very similar to Haydn's?' He paused and then murmured: 'As a musician and a Christian I tell you that your son belongs to one of the small group of chosen ones . . . who by the power of their genius will show music the road it must travel, perhaps for hundreds of years. . . . Do you remember the man who spoke those words, Nannerl?'

I nodded. 'Father Martin.'

'Yes. Giambattista Martin, twenty years ago, in the little room at

the Milan Opera after the first performance of *Lucio Silla*. Now the good Father has followed his great models, Palestrina, Victoria, Josquin des Prés, into eternity. The whole of Italy mourned him, and the thirteen most famous *maestri* in the country joined in composing a Requiem to be sung at his memorial service. A month later the Abbot of the Franciscan Monastery at Bologna wrote to Wolfgang that among Father Martini's papers a letter had been found addressed "*Al mio allievo molto amato, Wolfgang Amadeo Mozart a Vienna.*" The message it contained was only a few words: "Forward, my son, forward! The road is right. Remain faithful to yourself, and your work shall live through the centuries!"

Papa and I gazed out at the Lake, each pursuing our own thoughts. After a minute or two I broke the silence. 'Haydn, Papa—you were speaking of Haydn and the quartets. How proud Wolfgang must have been.'

My father came abruptly out of his reverie. 'Yes, Nannerl, he took the scores, walked towards Haydn, and said: "My dear friend, a father sending his sons forth into the wide world might wish to present them, for protection and guidance, to the most celebrated man of his time, who by a lucky stroke of fate chanced also to be his best friend. In this sense I would entrust to you my brain-children, begotten with long and arduous toil. Please receive them kindly, and with indulgence towards those faults which may have escaped a father's partial eye. Take them to your heart, be their protector, guide and friend."'

Papa looked at me with shining eyes, and then resumed his account: 'It was very quiet in the room as Wolfgang handed Herr Haydn the music. The great man glanced at it for a few instants, then embraced your brother and kissed him on both cheeks. Well, Nannerl, I trust you will not call me a sentimental old fool if I confess to you that this moment made good a thousand heavy blows which fate has dealt me.'

'No, Papa', I thought, 'I certainly will not.'

After all that had happened and all he had said in past years, I was amused by Papa's attitude to the Webers. 'They are truly charming', he declared, 'and I cannot say otherwise. Frau Weber was at great pains to help me in every way, and as for Aloysia Lange, Nannerl—why, I can easily understand Wolfgang having been captivated. If I

were only twenty years younger, I don't know but what I myself . . .'

We both laughed at this. Papa was still smiling when he continued: 'Strange, very strange, my child. I have wondered a good deal lately from whom Wolfgang may have inherited his unfaithful nature. It could not possibly be from Mama, so it must come from my side of the family—a disturbing thought, is it not?'

'Unfaithful nature?' I cried. 'You mean that Wolfgang already . . . you mean he is unfaithful to Constanze?'

Papa pondered, and then smiled once more. 'Somehow I don't think we should take it too tragically if he makes calf's eyes at Frau von Trattner, who is a pupil of his and the wife of a rich printer forty years older than herself. Nor, now I have met her, do I feel disposed to blame him for harbouring tender feelings towards his "Violet", Nancy Storace.'

According to Papa, Nancy is a beautiful and vivacious young English singer, who lives in brilliant and lavish style, and has established a salon where the leading figures in Vienna's musical and theatrical world forgather.

'Why is she called his "Violet"?' I asked.

'You know that little lyric by Herr Goethe?' said Papa. 'The one which begins:

A violet grew in the field,
Head bowed and from the world concealed.
It was a darling violet. . . .'

I nodded.

'Wolfgang set that to music', Papa continued, 'and it was first sung by Nancy Storace, who has the most enchanting voice. Now everybody in Vienna is singing it after her, and that is why they call her "the Violet". The little melody seems to have brought the two young people together.'

'But what about Constanze?'

'Oh, she does not take the affair seriously and even chaffs Wolfgang about his misbehaviour. She is satisfied so long as she has enough dresses and shoes and hats, etc., and she also realises she may get more of them—it may be advantageous for Wolfgang to frequent Nancy's gatherings, so that he meets influential people who can advance his career.' This brought Papa to Wolfgang's encounter with the famous Abate Lorenzo Da Ponte.

One day a man of very striking appearance entered Nancy's salon. He was tall and lean and dark-skinned, with an exceedingly high forehead, deep-set black eyes, a huge hawk-nose and a strong chin. He strode across to Wolfgang, ignoring everybody else in the room, seized my brother's hands with an extravagant gesture, and announced solemnly: 'Maestro Mozart, having followed your career with the most intense admiration, I, Lorenzo Da Ponte, offer you my talent, my industry, my experience—in a word, my partnership!'

Wolfgang must have gasped! One of his dearest dreams had astonishingly come to fulfilment: he was being asked to collaborate with this extraordinary man who, at thirty-five, was already a legend.

I had heard a great deal about Da Ponte, for magazines like the *Wiener Diarium* were frequently writing about him. His parents were poor Venetian Jews, but he was baptised at fourteen, finished his education in a church seminary, and was ordained a priest. Despite his ecclesiastical office and dignities he soon fell under the influence of Signor Casanova, Chevalier de Seingalt, who was also living in Venice at the time. Casanova taught the Abate to use love-hungry women for his own purposes, to set them working in gambling dens and brothels, and also on the Piazza San Marco. At length some of these cheated women rebelled, there was a great scandal, Da Ponte's parishioners threw him out of his church, and both he and Casanova were ordered to be arrested.

Casanova was sent to Venice's notorious prison, the Piombi, but the Abate escaped, was sentenced *in absentia* to fifteen years' deportation, and began an adventurous journey through Europe. His penultimate sojourn was at Dresden, where he was engaged on the pious work of translating some of the Psalms—and also committed certain characteristic peccadilloes. He had to leave Dresden rather abruptly; and so he came to Vienna and Salieri.

Salieri was well aware of the increasing importance in opera of a good libretto. No longer could the familiar poetic drama, about ancient gods or heroes, be seized on and set to music—often by several rival composers at the same time. New blood was needed, writers who could produce work of originality. Salieri was shrewd enough to recognise in Da Ponte a brilliant potential librettist. He presented him to the Emperor, suggesting that Joseph should appoint as Poet to his Imperial Court Theatre 'the Abate Lorenzo

Da Ponte, Doctor of Divinity and Professor of the Universities of Treviso and Padua'. In this introduction the Venetian *bordelli*, the fifteen years' deportation and other unimportant matters, were conveniently forgotten.

Joseph II looked at the striking man in priest's attire, and asked with a smile: 'And how many plays have you written, Abate?' A moment's thought was followed by the simple reply: 'None one, Your Majesty.' At which the Emperor smiled again and remarked: 'Good! Then at least my court theatre will have a virgin muse!'

So Da Ponte was appointed, and one of the first things he did was to acquire a mistress in the opera company. He selected the beautiful Italian singer Adriana Ferraresi, a useful ally in the various intrigues which were proceeding behind the scenes. His amorous affairs may have flourished, but his poetic endeavours prospered less: the collaboration with Salieri did not go at all smoothly. They laboured for many months on an opera called *Il Ricco d'un Giorno*, and it resulted in disastrous failure. According to old theatrical custom each blamed the other. They quarrelled violently and Salieri shouted: 'Never again an opera with Da Ponte'—to which the Abate retorted, 'I'd sooner have my hand cut off than let him set to music a single line more from my pen.'

And so, according to Viennese gossip, Salieri went to the Emperor once more, and informed him: 'We shall need a new Court Theatre Poet, Your Majesty.'

Joseph was anything but pleased: 'I gave Da Ponte a contract on your advice, Salieri, and I pay him six hundred guilders a year. Before I dismiss him, I shall wish to see at least one more opera by him. If you do not wish to work with him any more, then get yourself another librettist, pay him, and provide a suitable composer for the Abate. *Basta!*'

Salieri was not angry when Da Ponte began working with Wolfgang, for he hoped that a libretto by the author of *Un Ricco d'un Giorno* would bring to grief his hated rival, the composer of *Il Seraglio*. A Mozart-Da Ponte partnership was thus to be encouraged.

But Da Ponte easily saw through the other's feigned amiability. 'Have no fears of me', he told Wolfgang in Nancy's salon. 'Trust me as I trust you, and we'll soon show that damned bonbon-eating glutton the error of his ways.'

The next day, in Wolfgang's apartment, the two began to discuss their plans.

If Papa is pretty well satisfied with his son's progress, he is ecstatic over his grandson. Baby Karl is the image of Wolfgang at that age, and a fine plump child, robust and healthy. Papa spent a great deal of time with him, and is quite the expert now on raising infants.

Yes, he talked much of Karl while he was staying with us, and also of the baby which I shall soon be bearing. If it is a boy, and I am sure it will be, we shall christen him Leopold. I believe Papa is even more excited than I am, and certainly more than Berchtold, though of course my husband is pleased in his taciturn way.

I pray that my child will be less grave and withdrawn than his father, and I hope he will be a Mozart in his love of music. Yet I would not have him take the road Wolfgang has had to travel under Papa's guidance. I do not want him to have such great talents that he is harried by ambitions.

I shall be content if my son's talents are mediocre, but he has a kind, equable, happy disposition, if he can play in a boat on the lake like these children I see before me now, and take pleasure in simple things. I would sooner he knew the names of trees and flowers and animals in the forests than the strict rules of counterpoint—and the names of mighty princes. I do not want him to be received as a child prodigy in the Palace of Versailles or applauded by the crowds in London's Spring Gardens. No, I prefer that he should see and enjoy the loveliness of a lake in the Salzkammergut, that he should have many friends and learn to laugh and be happy.

St Gilgen, 27th July 1786

TODAY is my son's first birthday, and a special day for me to write in my diary. I sit here at my table on the terrace, the crystal-clear lake lies in front of me, and there next to me my one-year-old son is sleeping peacefully.

Even after a year I am still amazed at the miracle of his being and growing. Often I look at him silently for minutes, as if I were in a

dream; then suddenly I wake and rub my eyes, shaking my head incredulously at the thought: 'This little creature is yours, yours!' I know that millions of mothers all over the world must be thinking just the same thing, yet I cannot help considering myself enviable beyond all the rest for my happiness of the moment. And no doubt all mothers share these sentiments.

I am delighted that Papa has brought Teresa here again on one of his periodic visits. It is quite like the old days before my marriage—nearly two years now, but how long ago it seems! Of course she adores little Leopold, and considers him the most wonderful infant in the world. As for me, I have so far avoided turning my geese into swans, and I cannot pretend that Leopold is a handsome child. His eyes are rather narrow, his mouth is tiny, and he is taking a long time growing the right amount of hair for a baby of his age! He is very good and quiet, however; he cries little, but also smiles rather seldom. He may have inherited from Berchtold the even temper of a countryman, and also that inward-turned nature. Ah well, perhaps that will do him no harm either.

Berchtold has softened towards me a little since Leopold was born. He is fond of the child, and treats him with the same sort of stern affection that he showed *me* in the first weeks of our marriage. I do not think the boy looks like his father and Papa says that Leopold is a true Mozart, taking after now himself, now Wolfgang, now Mama—and sometimes even me, the child's mother!

My father has blossomed these last months. In February he spent three weeks at Munich, enjoying the carnival with our dear Bullinger, who is now living there. Papa is already planning heavily for the future.

'Yes, Nannerl', he exclaimed the other day, returning to his favourite theme, 'we must make a true Mozart out of our Leopold. Another Mozart to astonish the world, to produce great music. . . .'

'Dear Papa', I interrupted, 'don't you think it's a little early for such ambitious schemes?'

'Early, child? Think of Wolferl when he was three years old and when . . .'

Berchtold had come out on the terrace just before this, and heard what Papa was saying. He frowned: 'I am the boy's father, and I have my own ideas how he shall be brought up. Nannerl is right, it is far too early to make these plans.'

‘I did not do my son any disservice’, protested Papa, ‘by bringing him up as a musician. Or do you think I did?’

As so often, Berchtold simply made no answer. But Papa continued: ‘No—little Leopold must become a composer, a virtuoso; one who can be seen with princes, with the Emperor, even with the Holy Father in Rome. It will not be long now before I can sit with him at the piano and tell him what music is. A little boy like that is a treasure. The Lord God entrusts him to you, bidding you “show forth the glory which I, the Lord, have put into him, develop it, increase his talents a hundredfold.”’

It was a ghostly scene, just as if the last thirty years had not existed; and I sighed with relief when Teresa broke the thread of his daydreams by calling us in to dinner.

Beautiful Josepha Duschek has been in Salzburg with her husband, visiting relatives here. She is the Prague prima donna with whom Wolfgang had a brief flirtation while he was still in his teens, and since the success of *Il Seraglio* she has evidently decided to become the principal ambassador of his art in Bohemia. She came straight from Vienna, and we could have had no better source of news about *The Marriage of Figaro*, the first opera Wolfgang has written with Lorenzo Da Ponte. Arriving in Vienna a month before it opened, Josepha spent many hours with Wolfgang and his friends, attended most of the rehearsals, and of course the first performance.

The Duscheks having expressed a wish to meet me, Papa brought them over to St Gilgen one day last month. They are an oddly contrasted couple, for Dr Franz Duschek, a well-known pianist and music teacher, is a modest and retiring man, plainly devoted to his wife; while she has a quicksilver temperament, merry, exuberant, coquettish, and (as we gathered from her conversation) is surrounded by a variety of admirers. She sings in the opera, she gives concerts, and she must have a considerable position in Prague both socially and artistically.

Berchtold soon excused himself, and when he had gone Josepha plunged at once into her account of *Figaro*, for which I had been waiting so eagerly. ‘Years ago’, she declared, ‘I made a vow that I would help Wolfgang whenever the opportunity came my way. It has come now. *Figaro* must be known the world over, and I am convinced I can play a part in achieving that. But in Vienna this

wonderful opera has been the victim of intrigues and jealousies such as you, my innocent friends, would hardly credit. You may not comprehend that maze of treacherous brambles, but I will do my best to guide you through them.'

First she explained to us the difficulties in the choice of libretto. This was based on Beaumarchais' celebrated play, *Folle Journée ou Les Noces de Figaro*, which had, set the world talking ever since its author, five years ago, had offered it to the Théâtre Français. Louis XVI had the play read to him, and at first forbade its performance because of its dangerous political tendencies; but he was later obliged to rescind this ban in face of insistence by the Parisian public and by Marie Antoinette herself. When at length performed, the *Folle Journée* was so successful that it had to be given sixty-eight times in succession.

In Vienna the Emperor quashed attempts to have the comedy performed. When he was in France, he sensed that the country was on the verge of revolution unless the court and aristocracy abandoned their frivolous immorality and attempted to better the lot of a much-abused populace. As Beaumarchais' piece exposed this immorality all too clearly, Joseph regarded it as an incitement to revolution, and he told Count Pergen, his Chief of Police: 'If it is to be given at all, it is up to you to have changes made so that it cannot disturb the populace or cause danger to the safety of the realm.'

The Count naturally refused to guarantee such results, so the enlightened Joseph II, who prided himself on his liberal rule, was in a quandary. The rumours of a censorship to prevent the inhabitants of his capital from thinking dangerous thoughts simply made the Viennese more curious than ever to see the forbidden play.

It was therefore a brilliant stroke on Da Ponte's part when, at a private audience with Joseph, he suggested that the Emperor could escape from the dilemma by having the play turned into an *opera buffa*, with nothing more than a little harmless love and court intrigue, and everything revolutionary greatly watered down. That way everybody ought to be content: the Viennese would at last see their *Folle Journée* in a safe form, the Emperor would stand forth as the wise and tolerant monarch not afraid of a silly little comedy, and Messrs Da Ponte and Mozart would have the chance of writing the opera of their choice.

But the Emperor still had his misgivings. 'You know, Da Ponte',

he said, 'your friend Mozart is excellent for instrumental music, but up till now he has only written one opera of importance—I mean *Il Seraglio*—and that was nothing out of the way.'

Da Ponte protested that he found Mozart's music enchanting, and repeated his promise that nothing in the book would mar the dignity of the Imperial Opera. With these assurances the Emperor appeared to be satisfied. 'Good', he said. 'Then as far as the music is concerned, I shall rely on your taste, and as far as morals are concerned, on your tact and skill.'

Papa and I had been following Josepha's story avidly. 'After that', she resumed, 'Wolfgang and Da Ponte set to work very rapidly, and soon had libretto and music almost complete. But meanwhile intrigues had begun, particularly over who should play the part of Susanna. Both Da Ponte's mistress and Salieri's, La Ferraresi and La Cavalieri, thought they had presumptive rights, and fluttered round Wolfgang, little knowing that he had written the part for Nancy Storace, and had already promised it to her. When they discovered this, they became allies and conspired to have the opera's performance postponed. Da Ponte, knowing that Nancy would be the perfect Susanna, succeeded in soothing his mistress by telling her that the English singer was shortly going home and then the part would be hers.

'But the other girl fanned the flames of Salieri's mounting displeasure. He went about cursing that abominable rogue Da Ponte, who had cheated him with trash like *Il Ricco d'un Giorno*, while offering this wretched young German a jewel such as *Figaro*. Worse still', Josepha declared, 'having seen both book and music, Salieri realised that Wolfgang had broken through the mundane bounds of *opera buffa* and produced a score of sublime inspiration.'

She paused for breath, and then went on excitedly: 'In his rage Salieri wrote direct to Monsicur Beaumarchais in Paris, asking him for an opera libretto. This was something Da Ponte must prevent at all costs—Beaumarchais as competitor in the opera business, supported by the powerful Salieri. So he promptly forgot about the hand he had vowed to cut off, and approached Salieri once more with a proposal for a new opera. When Wolfgang heard of this, he reproached the Abate with treachery, and then, of course, Salieri in his turn discovered that Wolfgang was trying to prevent the revival of the Salieri-Da Ponte partnership.'

'For Heaven's sake, *dear* Josepha!' I exclaimed, and all four of us laughed. 'Da Ponte, Wolfgang, Salieri, Beaumarchais, Nancy, the Emperor, Ferraresi, Cavalieri . . . spare us any more. Please, *please*—tell us about the opening night. How was the opera; how did people like it?'

'Well, we sat in the front row', Josepha replied, 'and I was thus able to watch Wolfgang all through the evening. His face was glowing with the fire of genius. He had himself trained the singers, and his exaltation had been transferred to them. Nancy was superb. On the first night nearly all the arias had to be repeated, on the second night five of them, on the third, seven. The whole audience was wild with enthusiasm, except for a few weary wiseacres, one of whom was this Count Pergen, a close friend of the Emperor's! I heard him say to his neighbour: "Very tedious, the whole thing, is it not?"'

'So!' said Papa. 'His Haughtiness the ass Pergen did not like *Figaro*. What does it matter, if the audience kept demanding the numbers again and again?'

Josepha hesitated: 'It is not quite as simple as you think, Herr Mozart. To depreciate the opera before the Emperor, Count Pergen made use of that very point. He asserted that these encores were a strain on the singers, and would prevent them taking part in other operas for several days.'

Papa was seething with anger and disgust. 'Of all the miserable, impertinent, lunacies I have ever heard', he cried, 'that is the worst.'

'True', said Josepha sadly, 'but it had the effect Pergen desired. *Figaro* has scarcely been performed at all since then, and so short-sighted Vienna spurns a masterpiece once more. But wait till I tell my friends in Prague about the glories of *Figaro*, and you shall see them acclaim Mozart—if only to spite Vienna.'

I have met the Duscheks once more since then, at a court concert given in their honour by our Prince-Archbishop: for two hours they offered us a programme of most charming music, and Josepha sang several of the arias from *Figaro*. It amuses me to think that our old enemy Colloredo has to treat the Baroness Berchtold with due respect, inviting her to such festive occasions like any other member of the Salzburg aristocracy.

A few rows in front of us sat the Countess Lodron with her daughter Louisa and her son-in-law Count Sebastian Martinitz. From where I was sitting, Louisa Martinitz' face was in profile, and

I could not take my eyes off that quiet, proud, beautiful young woman, listening enthralled to the music. I hoped we would meet at the reception in the Residence after the concert, and when the time came she approached me with a slight smile and addressed me very formally: 'I trust you may still remember me, Baroness.' I replied in the same ceremonious manner: 'But of course, Countess. I remember with great pleasure the many hours spent in your company.' Then we introduced our husbands, and Berchtold, in unusually amiable humour, engaged Count Martinitz in a discussion on the respective merits of hunting in Bohemia and Salzburg.

I seized the opportunity to take Louisa aside. 'Are you happy, Louisa?' I asked her in a low voice.

'I believe I am', she replied, and then quickly amended her words: 'No, Nannerl, I know I am. I married a man who was almost a stranger to me, and he knew he must win my heart if he wished me to forget what had happened before. And he *has* won my heart. . . . And your brother, Baroness? He is well, I trust?'

'Thank you, Countess. He is in good health.'

We both resumed the tones of formal politeness, as the two men rejoined us. There was no further occasion to ask Louisa other questions, but at least I was now able to study this husband whom she had learnt to love. Martinitz was a dashing, elegant, highly attractive man of about thirty—well aware, I noticed, of the effect he had upon women. I felt myself being assessed and weighed at a glance. 'Inspid provincial matron', the verdict may have been. 'Probably quite pretty a few years ago.'

At this moment Josepha, looking radiant, came towards us. 'Nannerl, Nannerl', she called out gaily, 'everybody is congratulating me, and I haven't heard a single word from you. Oh, I beg your pardon', she added demurely, when she saw I was with friends she had not met.

'Madame Josepha Duschek', I said, introducing her. 'The Countess Martinitz and Count Sebastian Martinitz. A happy meeting, I hope, since you are both from Prague.'

Murmuring a compliment which I knew to be deeply sincere, Louisa shook the prima donna's hand. Then she stepped back, and the Count kissed the hand which Madame Duschek offered him. It flashed through my mind that the kiss was carried on a shade longer than admiration for Josepha's art or normal gallantry required.

WITHIN the space of two months I have received three long letters from Wolfgang, all containing the solemn injunction to destroy them when read: they were for my eyes alone.

The first was written after the death of his third son, Johann Leopold, who was born prematurely, a weak sickly baby, and only lived a single month. From the first hour of his life, Constanze enveloped him in a passionate and despairing love, as if she sensed that he was too puny to live. For three weeks she kept unceasing vigil over him, allowing nobody except the doctor to come near him. When Frau Weber tried to see the child, Constanze shouted and screamed like one demented, struck her mother with her fists, and drove her from the house. After the child had breathed its last, she kept it clasped to her breast for many hours, and only when she at last sank into a sleep of sheer exhaustion could they take the poor mite away and bury it.

'I can understand her intense sorrow at losing this second child', Wolfgang wrote, 'but her erratic and unbalanced behaviour since then has reached frightening proportions; and I am afraid it only illustrates the hopeless blind alley at which our marriage has arrived. She considers herself doomed to such tragedies, and now feels isolated and neglected. So all her bitterness and indignation against fate and the world must be wreaked on the only two people she sees continually: little Karl and myself.

'Karl is nearly three, a healthy, chubby-faced child, with a placid cheerful nature in ordinary times. But now he is often in tears because of his mother's anger, which he cannot understand or avoid, and this only provokes her. I do not think she ever had much feeling for him, but I secretly hoped it might grow because he alone of our three children has survived: that would have been one small blessing to accrue from our poor little Johann's death. But exactly the reverse has happened: a strange unnatural hatred of Karl has taken possession of her. If I try to shield him, she will abuse the pair of us all the

more. She and I quarrel a great deal; sometimes we hardly speak to each other for days, and she often has terrible fits of weeping. Then she considers herself an invalid, and refuses to leave her bed. But as soon as she hears that I have been invited to Prince Galizin, Countess Thun or Baroness Waldstätten, she miraculously recovers, jumps out of bed, calls for the hairdresser, and begins to dress in her most elegant gown. Then her mood will change again. She finds all manner of excuses for not going, and I am obliged to explain once more how important the evening may be for me, before she agrees to come with me.

‘In company she is awkward and unsure of herself, and usually makes an unfavourable impression. I have to excuse her gaffes, and as far as possible I try to avoid introducing her to strangers, who might mistake her tactlessness for deliberate arrogance. She misunderstands this too, so it leads to more reproaches and recriminations afterwards, more scenes and tantrums and fits of weeping. I only breathe freely when I can leave the house and find with Nancy Storace the quiet sympathy and serenity which I so sorely need.’

The second letter spoke of nothing but Nancy, and the deep happiness which has now come into Wolfgang’s life. It started as a flirtation, with neither of them attaching much importance to it at the time. Then the first real embraces, stolen in some dream-like hour, and the confused sad awakening, the shame, the parting. For a couple of weeks they would go on their separate ways, but mysteriously, imperceptibly, in both their hearts, the mutual tenderness swelled into a great, blissful, all-consuming love. Now came nights full of hot passionate embraces, bringing Wolfgang a limitless joy such as he had never experienced before; nor were the awakenings less brightly gilded with the ecstasy of love.

It was the time when *Figaro* was written, and for Wolfgang *Figaro* meant Nancy. In Cherubino’s sighing ‘*Voi, che sapete*’, in the Countess’ noble ‘*Porgi amor*’, in Susanna’s ‘*Deh vieni, non tardar*’, in ‘*Dove sono*’, and in ‘*Non so più cosa son*’—she was everywhere. All through the score the words were singing within him: Nancy, Nancy! Love, love, love! He was the degraded, down-trodden yet dearly loved Figaro, he was Count Almaviva who took women as they offered themselves because such was his nature, he was Cherubino too, searching endlessly for the elusive creature whose love would bring the fulfilment of all desires.

‘Yes, Nannerl’, he wrote, ‘and unlike Cherubino I have indeed reached my goal. In Nancy’s arms my life’s great yearning has been stilled. She belongs to me wholly, body and soul, and all my chagrins and sadness, the quarrels at home and the intrigues in the theatre, are forgotten, they are turned to nothing through the miracle of Nancy’s embrace. I know that one day she must leave Vienna—perhaps quite soon; but I will not think of that day. Yet when I do think of it, I know one thing: I must leave Constanze. I must go to England too, and begin a new life there with my own dearest Nancy.’

Like everybody else in Vienna, Constanze of course knew of the affair; but she refused to acknowledge its seriousness. She would pretend it was one of Wolfgang’s many ‘chambermaideries’; and perhaps the invention of this word served to conceal her true feelings: jealousy, fear, shame, resentment. She might hurl a few insults at Wolfgang’s head or laugh scornfully at his ‘cheapness’; but for her part he could go with his ‘chambermaid’ when he wished—as long as she too was left to do as *she* wished.

Then last month he went to Prague, and Constanze of course insisted on going with him. She was well aware that she had made Wolfgang unhappy, but when it came to showing she was Frau Mozart (and perhaps making a conquest or two by the way) she knew how to impose her will on my brother.

In his third letter, which I received today, Wolfgang recounted his experiences in Prague. Josepha Duschek had been as good as her word, and *Figaro*, performed there as a result of her strenuous insistence, achieved such a resounding success as the Bohemian capital had hardly experienced before. Its melodies were whistled by every baker’s and cobbler’s apprentice; street-musicians sang the arias; the sound of the overture, played on ill-tuned pianos, could be heard from countless houses; and at masked balls gay society danced to tunes from the opera.

Figaro, and always *Figaro*. Prague was a city without a court, and so without the intrigues which a court, it seems, must inevitably provoke. ‘There was no Salieri there’, Wolfgang congratulated himself, ‘no Pergen and no Collredo. I was in my element, enjoying every minute of the time. Strangers addressed me in the streets, telling me how many times they had seen *Figaro*, and one day I received a delegation of distinguished Bohemian musicians, led by our good Franz Duschek, who expressed their pride at welcoming me in

Prague, and their hopes that I might make the city my permanent home. Josepha, of course, had worked out a very full programme for me. I conducted *Figaro* at the Opera House, I gave a public concert—which earned me a thousand guilders—and I played privately at many aristocratic houses.'

One of these recitals, his letter continued, was at the house of a Count Schmolik, and afterwards he saw someone standing before him whom he had not met for many years: Louisa Martinitz. Her cheeks were hollow, she looked pale and thin and ill; Wolfgang was horrified by her appearance. Before he could say a word, she gave him a sign with her eyes to follow her into a little salon leading from the main room. They found two chairs in a quiet corner, and while a liveried footman set down two glasses of champagne on a table in front of them, she whispered hastily, furtively: 'We have very few minutes, Wolfgang, but please listen to me. You are the only person in the world who can help me.'

'I, Louisa?' he stammered. 'But . . .

'No, do not say anything yourself', she entreated him. 'Only listen to what I have to tell you. For the last six months my husband and I have been strangers—Josepha Duschek has become his mistress. He goes everywhere with her, he loads her with jewels, and for her sake he is plunging into debt. Oh, he is ruining us all with his terrible infatuation. And this needs must happen just at the time when after many hard struggles I could hope for a happy marriage—a happy life.'

She looked at him with wide, sad eyes.

'And now you want me. . . .'—Wolfgang hesitated.

'Yes, I want you to talk to her, explain everything to her, implore her. . . .'

Just then the stout and good-natured Count Schmolik had entered the little salon. 'Well, well, so I have found you at last', he boomed jovially; and continued, turning to Louisa: 'I am so sorry, my beautiful Countess, but I am obliged to take our Maestro away from you. Most important artistic affairs!' he added fussily. 'Secrets, secrets! Signor Bondini, the director of the Opera House, is expecting our Mozart, and of course our wonderful and revered Josepha Duschek will be there too. Great things are going to happen! Very great things!'

Wolfgang had only time to give Louisa a glance of sympathy,

a silent promise to help her; then the Count dragged him away.

'Signor Bondini has something to say to you, my friend', Josepha declared as he entered a small room where the noise of the party sounded muffled and remote. 'Something which might be of importance to you, to us, to the entire world of music.'

Bondini walked towards him and seized his hands. 'My theatre, Maestro', he pronounced with great solemnity, 'is already indebted to you for two successes, and we should consider it an honour if you would write a new opera especially for Prague, for the Opera House, for my humble self.'

Wolfgang of course was overjoyed. He accepted enthusiastically, and told Bondini that immediately he returned to Vienna he would consult his librettist, the Abate Da Ponte. 'I am eager to begin work at once', he declared, 'so that it may be ready this autumn.'

'And as far as scenery and costumes are concerned', said Bondini, 'please do not consider yourself under any restraint from the point of view of expenditure. Our patron here'—he indicated an elegant young cavalier who till then had been standing in the background—'has magnanimously consented to finance the new opera, and he wishes to show the people of Prague that money is no object when it comes to presenting a real work of art.'

Count Sebastian Martinitz stepped forward and offered Wolfgang his hand with an engaging smile.

Now Wolfgang's eyes were newly opened to the way affairs have always been carried on, and no doubt always will be, behind the scenes of the theatre. To receive a commission for an opera, you must first win the interest of some powerful lady, who in her turn must capture the affections of some wealthy admirer. But this time my brother vowed he would not subscribe to these subtle intrigues. If the price for fulfilling his ambitions was the destruction of Louisa Martinitz' happiness, then he would tell Josepha plainly of his attitude and refuse the commission.

Soon afterwards he concluded with her that incredible secret pact of which no one else knows and no one else must ever learn. 'No one but you, Nannerl', he wrote, 'and I confide it to you only because you once revealed to me the sacrifice Louisa made for my sake when she married Martinitz. I want you to see that I have at last paid her my debt of gratitude.'

The Duscheks live in a lovely villa called the Bertramka, surrounded by vineyards and parks, high on the hills above the river Vltava, looking down on Prague's thousand steeples and turrets and old castle. Wolfgang went to see Josepha there, and as they wandered together round the beautiful estate, he dwelt on Louisa's anguish, tried to touch Josepha's heart, implored her to release Count Martinitz from her thralldom. In the end, after hours of fruitless discussion, Josepha consented—on her own terms.

I am still not clear—but then nor is Wolfgang himself—how easy the renunciation was for her. Did Count Martinitz stand close to her heart, or had she merely accepted him as just one of the extravagant admirers whom a prima donna may expect to have in train? The important thing is that she promised to dismiss the Count on the very day the new opera was performed. Only then, and on condition that the Count had nothing to do with financing it, did Wolfgang commit himself to writing the opera and delivering it for the autumn season.

Three days later he signed his contract in Bondini's office, received the agreed sum of a hundred ducats, and returned to Vienna.

St Gilgen, middle of March 1787

I AM concerned for my father. He went to Munich as usual last month, and seems to have enjoyed the carnival in Bullinger's company, but since his return I have detected increasing signs of frailty. One can see the curious caprice of old age in his treatment of our little Leopold.

The boy has been staying with him, because I want Papa to have as much pleasure as possible from his grandson while he still may. Leopold is happy enough at Hannibal Square, spoiled by Teresa, and he is fond of his grandfather, but he remains perplexed by Papa's fantasy of rearing another child prodigy. My father has already started on his musical instruction, although the boy is not yet two. It is strange and affecting to see the old man and the small child seated together at the piano. Papa will touch the keys, notes will sound, and all the time he tries desperately to get the boy to repeat

the notes. 'One has to be patient with him, Nannerl', he tells me. 'One must bring him to music with great love. Sometimes he sees already what I want from him, and then our little Leopold's eyes begin to shine, and he smiles at me.'

When he says something like this, I have to turn away so that my father and my son should not see the tears in my eyes.

It was a great joy to me last week when Wolfgang's three British friends, on the first stages of their journey back to England, halted their coach at St Gilgen and spent the day with us. One of them was his famous 'Violet', Nancy Storace, of whom I had already heard so much. She was accompanied by her brother, a composer himself, who has had two operas performed during his stay in Vienna, and by Michael Kelly, the Irish tenor who sang the part of Don Basilio in the first performances of *Figaro*.

Mr Kelly is only twenty-three, extremely tall and burly, of fair complexion, with a charming ready smile and an abundance of good humour. He came to Vienna to study singing, and it is his ambition to become director of an opera house. The magnitude of his success as Basilio seems to augur well for his ambition, but he persisted in deflecting all the credit on to Wolfgang, of whom he could not speak too highly. They were on extremely friendly terms. The young Irishman was ever ready to make up a game of billiards, which these days is my brother's favourite pastime. According to Mr Kelly, Wolfgang would rush from his piano or writing desk to find distraction at the billiard table.

'And does he play with skill?' I asked.

'Well, Baroness', the Irishman stammered, 'he, er—how shall I put it?—he is always the second winner.'

Stephen Storace has no less boundless admiration for Wolfgang, and his great desire is to bring my brother to England. 'Believe me, gracious lady, London would be at his feet in no time. It is there he belongs, and we, his friends and disciples, must unite to persuade him to turn his back on Vienna, the city of intrigues and cabals, and live and work in London.'

Struck by the patent sincerity of his enthusiasm, I turned to Nancy, who had listened to her brother's words in silence. 'And is it your view too', I said, 'that London is better for Wolfgang than Vienna?'

A blush suffused her cheeks. 'It is very hard for me, Baroness, to give an unbiassed reply. You see: I love your brother!'

She spoke these last words so simply, so much as a matter of course yet also so much from the heart, that I understood in a flash the strength and fervour of Wolfgang's love for her.

'Nothing in this world', she affirmed quietly, 'would give me greater happiness than to rescue Wolfgang from the morass of misery which comes near to engulfing him in Vienna. The restlessness of his life and his need of some tranquillity are beginning to take their toll. He has put on weight, he is disturbed by his shortness of sight, and of course it is disastrous that he should live in a household where there is only turbulence. It is my dearest wish to see him away from Vienna, Baroness, and to create with him a new and happy life in my own country—in England.'

'England!' I could not help exclaiming. Certainly Wolfgang had written of this prospect, but now that it seemed so close to fruition I found myself startled. 'England, Miss Storace? But it is so terribly far away.'

'Far from where, Baroness?' she rejoined. 'It will be far enough from that scoundrel Salieri, whose grudge against your brother is fierce and relentless, and from your weak capricious Emperor, who has not the courage to place himself as a shield before the greatest of all his subjects. Far also from Constanze, who has not the slightest inkling of the greatness in her husband's soul, and far from the endless anxieties over money, the setbacks and jealousies of treacherous Vienna. Soon there will not be a single person to love him as he deserves to be loved.'

'Not a single person?' I protested. 'What of Joseph Haydn, whose love for Wolfgang is like a father's? Little Karl will need him more than ever, and I cannot forbear to speak of myself. He knows he can rely upon me, whatever may befall him.'

Nancy was plainly prepared for these questions, and she replied without hesitation: 'Herr Haydn thinks of going to London himself very soon. Little Karl, the most lovable child I have ever encountered, will stay with his father and me, and he shall find the most beautiful home he could wish for. . . .' She paused, and resumed in a tone of gentle sadness: 'As for yourself, Baroness, I know that I can and must speak frankly to Wolfgang's sister. You will have to endure a great sacrifice in accepting a long separation from the brother you love

so well. Nobody will be more grateful to you than Wolfgang himself.'

The four of us were silent, and I knew that all our thoughts were occupied only with my brother and his future. But after a minute Kelly interrupted our musings: 'I am sure our dear Baroness must be eager to learn something about the progress of Wolfgang's new opera.'

As if by magic, the faces of my guests were suddenly transformed. 'Ah, the new opera!'—all three of them were at once bubbling over with enthusiasm. Nancy sang and hummed a few of the arias which Wolfgang had already composed, and then her brother explained about the strange new form of the '*drama giocoso*', in which the work was being conceived, intermingling wild and extravagant humour with deep, even demonic tragedy. Finally Michael Kelly pleaded humorously with the Storaces that he be permitted to gain the audience's ear for a short while. 'If the Baroness wishes', he declared, 'I should be pleased to describe to her the severe birth-pangs of the opera, and the remarkable accident which led to its successful delivery!'

I replied that nothing would give me greater pleasure, and Kelly thereupon related the story with such a wealth of picturesque detail—he had heard it, after all, at first hand—that even today I envisage the whole scene as vividly as ever.

After Wolfgang's return to Vienna, he and Da Ponte searched long and fruitlessly for a worthy subject. They spent hours in the beer-houses of the inner city and the little wine-shops of Sievering and Grinzing. Da Ponte spoke of old Italian farces which he remembered, while Wolfgang recalled operas at the King's Theatre, London, and tragedies he had seen in later years at Salzburg. But in vain: one after the other all the ideas were rejected. Before long they were in despair, and seriously considered telling Bondini that they must abandon the contract. Then they agreed to spend one final evening searching for their opera subject. They wandered round the wine-houses once more, and towards midnight, after many fruitless discussions, they found themselves sitting in a tavern of ill repute in the Spittelberg district, looking miserably into the empty wine goblets which stood before them.

The room was filled with a most disreputable company: little hunch-backed pickpockets exchanging their experiences or trying to

bargain with sharp-nosed receivers; pitiful half-starved street-whores listening sullenly to their pimps' reproaches; painted boys of fourteen or fifteen, sitting next to red-haired procuresses, waiting for the degenerate aristocrats who might take them to the back rooms; sly-looking police informers with orders to report everything they saw and heard but who were not disinclined to sell their silence also.

The tavern door opened, and out of the haze of tobacco fumes there emerged the silhouette of a most unusual-looking man—a cavalier of some sixty years: lanky and elegant, a perfectly fitting silky white wig on his head, and attired in a blue coat with silvery border, silk knee-breeches, white stockings and shoes with silver buckles. Assured and masterful, as one accustomed to command, he swept into the middle of the room, raised a lorgnette and gazed haughtily around him.

Suddenly Da Ponte jumped up, ran towards the stranger, embraced him, and shouted joyfully: 'Giacomo, Giacomo! My friend—and master!' To which Giacomo Casanova, for it was none other, replied with no less enthusiasm: 'Lorenzo, my friend—and disciple! How wonderful to see you again!'

A minute later Casanova had joined Wolfgang and Da Ponte at their table, and after Wolfgang had been introduced, the Chevalier de Seingalt summoned the landlord, bidding him fetch his best wine and serve the best victuals which his kitchen had to offer at this late hour. The landlord leapt to the task, and sent up cold pork joint, jellied fish, roast goose, rich fruit cake—till there was no space left on the table. Casanova pounced on these delicacies as if he had not had a proper meal for days, and, when his hunger had been stilled, began to recount the story of his adventures during the ten years since he had last seen Da Ponte.

After escaping from the Venetian prison, in which he had spent sixteen miserable months, he had eked out a living as a violinist in a theatrical orchestra, a touring actor, a quack, a writer for the newspapers, an author of libellous books and pamphlets, a cardsharp, and a spy for powerful gentlemen; until finally he obtained a lieutenant's commission in some obscure regiment in Lombardy. From then on Signor Casanova's star began to rise: the Cardinal Aquaviva appointed him private secretary, he became an agent to the Vatican, doctor of law, diplomat, ambassador of the Portuguese King, adviser to Frederick II of Prussia in that monarch's most complicated *amours*,

director of a lottery in Paris, a digger for treasure in Spain. . . .

'Then', declared the Chevalier, 'my star sank once more. The great personages whom I had often served very faithfully did not wish to know me, and certain doors, which only a short time before were wide open to me, were now slammed in my face. I was plunged into the same poverty and wretchedness as when I broke out of the Piombi in Venice so many years ago.' He paused to devour some olives.

'Then why this feast?' enquired the Abate, indicating the delicacies on the table.

'Ah!' With a sweeping gesture Signor Casanova set aside such trivial matters. 'I suppose you, my dear Lorenzo, will pay for the pleasure of entertaining me, since I cannot deny that at present I have a woeful scarcity of money. But if you will let me resume my discourse, I shall hope to reassure you as to my general fortunes. In the last year or two, though my salary does not entirely suffice for my periodical appearances in society, I have been very fairly provided for.'

'A salary!' exclaimed Da Ponte. 'From whom, Giacomo?'

'From a certain Count Waldstein, who had made my acquaintance years before at Potsdam, at the court of King Frederick. He was so entranced by my conversation, if I may say so with all due modesty, that the next time he met me, he decided to enhance his own reputation by retaining my company for the delight of his guests. He enquired whether I would be willing to come to his castle at Dux near Prague, and set his library there in order. I had never expected to end up as a librarian, but my circumstances being thus reduced I was not disposed to refuse.'

'And he pays you well?'

'He pays me well enough, I must confess, for he greatly appreciates having me in his service. But it is somewhat tedious work for one of my disposition, as you, my dear Lorenzo, will easily imagine, and also I labour in somewhat secluded surroundings. So whenever he comes to Vienna for the season, I am only too ready to accompany him. It is advantageous to both parties, for I shall later be able to divert the guests at his dinner table with such new experiences as I may have gained while pursuing my true profession. You understand me, Lorenzo?'

Da Ponte chuckled: 'Women!'

‘Yes, my friend, women! Throughout my life, on the steep climb upwards and the equally steep descents, there have always been women around me. Women who loved me and made me gifts, women who hated and betrayed me. Provincial actresses, elderly Florentine duchesses, peasant girls from the Romagna, mistresses discarded by princes, shy maidens of good family tempted to learn from me the art of love, adventuresses who offered me their partnership in hazardous speculations. All, all of them came to me, in Italy, in Spain, in Germany, in Russia. . . .’

Casanova cut himself a slice of cake and drained his glass of wine. ‘And now I sit here at the banquet’, he concluded, ‘just like that Don Giovanni Tenorio in the famous comedy of our Venetian compatriot Carlo Goldoni, and I wait for the marble statue, the stone guest, who will come to fetch me in order to thrust me down into the deepest Hell.’

Wolfgang had listened to this narration with mounting excitement. Now he seized Da Ponte’s hand; the Abate looked at him and nodded. Both had been struck by the same thought. Casanova—Don Giovanni—the stone guest: they had found the story for their new opera.

Da Ponte began thinking aloud, improvising, as if out of nothing, the skeleton of a libretto: seductions, jealous rivals, a nocturnal rendez-vous, a duel, a masked ball, an innocent peasant girl with her jealous bridegroom, a cemetery, a banquet interrupted by the apparition of a marble statue: ‘Well, Don Giovanni, you invited me to dinner.’ Finally, the libertine struck by lightning, unrepentant even in death, dropping into an open grave. . . .

The Abate had worked himself into a passion of half-uttered thoughts and ideas, and when he stopped there was a minute of awed silence. Wolfgang’s eyes were shining: what a superb framework all this would make for his music! At length Casanova poured himself a last glass of wine, and drank it reflectively. ‘So in my old age’, he mused, ‘I am to become the hero of an opera. Tragedy or comedy, I wonder? Perhaps a little of both. At any rate the prospect rather appeals to me. But I must ask one question, my dear Lorenzo: how will the spoils be divided?’

‘The spoils, Giacomo?’ Da Ponte feigned incomprehension.

‘But of course, my friend. For my collaboration in the coming opera. There must be some payment, surely. After all, I brought you the idea, did I not?’

'The idea, Casanova, I would point out emphatically, is not from you. Goldoni, Molière and twenty or thirty others have had it before, among them Guiseppe Gazzaniga, whose new opera, *Il Convitato di Pietra*, is being played this very year in our native Venice.'

'And why then did you not think of it yourself?' objected Casanova. 'Why had I to mention Don Giovanni for you to find the story of an opera for Herr Mozart here?'

'Because in great art', Da Ponte replied, 'it always requires some small external impulsion to set genius in motion. When you were recounting your adventures and misdeeds, I had not the slightest notion that five minutes later you would have given me the idea for a great opera. All I thought was: how beautifully he tells a story! Truth and lies, reality and fantasy, everything grows in his tale to a grandiose unity of epic proportions. Why, I thought, does he not write it all down?' He paused, then banged his fist triumphantly on the table. 'Yes, Giacomo, yes: there, by way of return to you, is my idea. Write it down—your life!'

The three men had been talking so long that by now the tavern was almost deserted. Casanova looked thoughtfully into the smoke which still lay above the room, even though the landlord had opened the window, letting in the cool air of dawn. The Chevalier's aristocratic features dissolved at length into a delighted smile. 'Lorenzo', he said, 'I will own that you have done me a service. My life—my memoirs: it is a splendid conception. I am sure it would give vast gratification to the Count, and 'be reasonably remunerative into the bargain. Without such pecuniary profit, it is hard to pursue one's profession adequately, *à propos de quoi*'—he grinned impudently at the Abate—'I regret that I am not in a position to pay for Don Giovanni's banquet tonight!'

'Very well', agreed Da Ponte, in expansive humour, 'that too shall be recompense for your idea.' He called the landlord, who bowed deeply as he received the money, and the three men walked out of the tavern into the light of a bright spring morning. All were in the highest of spirits.

Da Ponte turned to his erstwhile master. 'But to acquit myself finally, Giacomo, of any charge that I have cheated you, I hereby invite you to be my guest at the first performance of our opera in Prague, to come to the city beforehand at our expense and amuse yourself there as you see fit. In return, I ask that you present me with

the first signed copy, suitably inscribed, of your memoirs, the inspiration for which I gave you this very night.'

'Prague?' pondered Casanova. 'Yes, I accept both condition and invitation. There are two or three women in Prague whose acquaintance I should renew most happily. And no doubt I shall discover others. . . .'

Wolfgang and Da Ponte exchanged glances and laughed. Plainly the Chevalier was himself again.

About a fortnight ago Wolfgang and Nancy parted. 'He has promised me faithfully that he will follow me to England', said Nancy. She spoke buoyantly enough, but I seemed to catch a note of doubt in her voice. 'When?' I asked.

'When he has found an honourable way of leaving Constanze; and as soon as he has completed *Don Giovanni* and seen it performed. Till then I shall do everything to prepare the ground for him in London, and . . . I shall go on hoping.'

These last words sounded far from convincing, and when I looked at Nancy I saw that tears had come into her eyes. Then she told me about the parting. Despite all her hopes she felt at that moment that it might be a long farewell, and she said to him: 'You will soon have forgotten me, Wolfgang. Thousands will sing Susanna after me, and *The Violet* too.'

'For me, Nancy', Wolfgang had replied, 'you will always remain the only one!'

We went out of the house. It was late afternoon, and my three guests wished to reach Salzburg that night so that they might see Papa next morning, and then continue their journey to Strasbourg and Calais. 'You really love my brother, Miss Storace', I said as I accompanied them to the coach.

'How can one help but love him?' she replied. 'That glowing, open-hearted man with the soul of a child, who has so little of the conqueror in him, yet who conquers every heart.'

A DISMAL and oppressive stillness lies over the house. Little Bimpy sleeps at my feet, and the silence is only disturbed by the monotonous scratching of my quill, my own breathing, and Teresa's soft sobs, which I can still hear coming from the kitchen. From Hannibal Square the scent of the lilac wafts hauntingly into the room, and twilight has gradually descended.

In the music-room my beloved father lies on his bier. He passed away in the early hours of this morning, peacefully and without any suffering.

A few weeks ago he began to complain of pains round his liver. Dr Barisani came and examined him, shook his head gravely as usual, then prescribed a light diet, not much salt or spices, plenty of peppermint tea, and above all, rest and sleep. 'No cause for any alarm at present', he answered my enquiry when I was alone with him. 'But, good Heavens, your father is nearly seventy, just as I am myself. At our age one never knows.'

A fortnight later there was a very marked change. Papa's face had turned an unhealthy yellow, he ate very little, and suffered from a listless fatigue which became worse and worse, obliging him to remain in bed most of the day. He could not easily follow a discussion any more, and it was only with little Leopold that he recovered something of his old liveliness.

For the last three weeks I have been at Hannibal Square to nurse him. Whether he realised he was dying I am still not sure. Once the Archbishop sent a chamberlain to ask news of Papa's condition, and Papa exclaimed: 'Colloredo enquiring after my health! You see, Nannerl, either he is not so bad as people would have us believe, or otherwise . . .'—he smiled slightly—'is my condition as grave as all that?'

He spoke much of Wolfgang, of his pride in his son, of how his wishes and hopes for Wolfgang have borne fruit after all. He quoted Joseph Haydn's words, he remembered Father Martini, Christian Bach, the English King; and last week he said suddenly: 'It was a wonderful life we four have lived together. Don't you think so too, Nannerl, my dearest daughter?'

Yesterday evening, about dusk, a young man appeared at the front

door, and told me in a thick⁰ Rhenish accent that he wished to see Herr Leopold Mozart. 'I have come straight from Vienna', he said, 'and the Maestro Wolfgang Mozart asked me to bring greetings to his father.' The visitor was only about seventeen or eighteen, of medium height and rather thick-set, with compelling eyes and long unkempt hair which tumbled over a broad high forehead. A wild youth, but with a strange attraction about him: I decided I could let him see Papa.

I asked him to enter, told him I was Wolfgang Mozart's sister, and explained about my father's condition. Then I led him upstairs to Papa's bedroom. He remained standing modestly at the door, while I went over to the bed to tell Papa the reason for the young man's visit.

'And how is my son?' It seemed very difficult for the old man to open his eyes and turn his face towards the stranger, who now hesitantly approached him and answered: 'He is well, Herr Kapellmeister.' It was a rough but not unpleasing voice. 'He hopes that you too will soon be in good health again, so that in the autumn you may go to Prague and attend the first performance of his new opera, *Don Giovanni*.'

'*Don Giovanni*!' With great effort Papa had sat up. 'Tell me more about it.'

'It deals with a libertine's earthly pilgrimage and journey to Hell', answered the boy.

'An unusual theme', my father murmured.

The youngster's face suddenly darkened. 'Music is something untouchably sacred, Herr Kapellmeister. To employ music for the description of lust and coarse sensuality is to abuse it.' His harsh tone and words conveyed a hint of his dedication to some imperious ideal still misty and unclear in his own mind.

'You are a musician, young man?' asked Papa.

'Organist to the Archbishop of Cologne', was the reply. 'Upon my importunate pleading, my Prince sent me to Vienna to have lessons in counterpoint and strict form with Mozart. The Maestro was not best pleased at the idea, being engrossed in his opera, but when he saw my first attempts at composition, he was kind enough to accept me as a pupil. At first all he did was to write down the themes of fugues and leave me to work them out, while he went on with his own work in another room. So the lessons were laborious for us both and seemed to me to progress very slowly.'

Wolfgang, I could be sure, would hardly consider it his business to instruct the coming generation in the dry, academic rules of musical theory, and probably he felt no personal sympathy for this uncouth and sullen-looking youngster.

My brother's pupil might have guessed my thought. 'I am afraid', he confessed, 'that I must have become rather tedious to Maestro Mozart, and kept him from doing more important things. But then one day, after he had heard me play the piano, he made a remark to some friend in the next room, which they later passed on to me as an encouragement to persevere.' He stopped, as if he had said too much; but Papa, who had been listening with keen interest, now pressed him: 'What did my son say?'

The boy hesitated, then murmured with a blush: 'He told them, "Keep an eye on that young man. He will make a noise in the world before long." You can well imagine, Baroness'—he turned to me for a moment—'how mightily I was encouraged.'

I was beginning to like our visitor rather more than I had done on first seeing him. He looked back at the bed, and addressed Papa once more: 'Last week, Herr Kapellmeister, the Maestro was distressed to receive a letter from Salzburg informing him of your illness, and at the same time I chanced to have a letter from home summoning me to return urgently because my mother was desperately sick. This sad coincidence led to an effect which I had dearly desired, but which otherwise might have taken months to produce. In the few days that were left, I felt I had come very much closer to the Maestro, and he to me.'

It sounded as if Wolfgang had recognised a generosity and warmth of heart behind the youth's unprepossessing manner and appearance, while the other had found a depth of feeling in my brother as a person which hitherto he had only heard in Wolfgang's music. And suddenly the young man saw in the theme of *Don Giovanni* not only bestial lust, but also the sublimity and greatness of death.

'Death is the true goal of our existence', Wolfgang had told him, 'and in the last few years I have become well acquainted with this best and truest friend of mankind.'

'Has his image nothing frightening for you any more, Master?' the boy had asked. 'Are you truly not terrified by him but only comforted?'

'I thank my God', Wolfgang replied, 'for having graciously

permitted me to see Death as the key which unlocks the door to our true happiness.'

Reporting my brother's words, the boy had spoken softly and reverently, and I do not know whether Papa was still able to hear them. I could hear his quiet and regular breathing, but his eyes were tightly closed, and his head had slumped back on to the pillow in deep exhaustion. Silently I made a sign for our visitor to go. 'Your son hopes, Herr Kapellmeister', he said in a low voice, 'that you will very soon feel better.'

Like an echo, barely audible, it came back from Papa's lips: '... very soon ... feel better.'

I brought our visitor to the front door, and he told me he would be continuing his journey at once in the direction of Munich, Augsburg and Stuttgart. 'Your brother, gracious lady, begs you to tell him the truth and not to hide it, in case your father's condition. . . .'

I thanked him, and he vanished into the mild spring night.

When I returned to the bedroom, the quiet breathing had ceased, and my father's face seemed to wear a serene and aloof smile in death.

Today the old friends came to bid Papa farewell: the Hagenauers and Haffners, Dr Barisani, Michael Haydn, Andreas Schachtner. The Archbishop sent a huge laurel wreath which has been placed at the foot of the bier. Tomorrow at midday my father will be buried at the small cemetery of St Peter's, and Father Dominicus, his erst-while pupil and loyal friend, will pronounce the last prayers.

In the next three or four days I shall put the house in order with Teresa and dissolve the small household. Teresa is coming back with me to St Gilgen, and so is Bimpy, although I am afraid the little dog will pine sadly for her dead master. I shall take back only a very few keepsakes, like Papa's violin, Mama's white bonnet and black silk apron, and a small wooden box, black and lacquered, which contains Wolfgang's letters. There will be a few things too which I must send to Vienna, among them—for Wolfgang specially asked that he might keep this should anything happen to Papa—our funny old piano which has its black keys where other pianos have white ones and white ones where the others have black.

Then I shall lock the house in Hannibal Square, and everything which has happened to us Mozarts there in fifteen years will become

no more than memories: laughter and tears, hopes and disappointments, joys and sorrows, friendship and love and music. Fifteen years ago Papa and Wolferl returned from their first visit to Italy, the Hagenauers came in that evening to greet them, we all talked about the death of Archbishop Sigismund and who would succeed him. That evening is where the memories of this house start for me; they end in last night's visit from that strange youth who was on his way home to the Rhineland, to his mother's sickbed, and whose name was Ludwig van Beethoven.

St Gilgen, middle of December 1787

IN this oppressively silent house everything Mozartian is far away from me, and I feel very much alone.

More than ever to-day I think of the cheerfulness and good humour which filled my home as a girl. A stream of visitors came to the house; they chatted with us, lightly or seriously, on a thousand different topics, and even the dull or vain did not fail to enliven us, since as soon as they were gone Wolferl would employ his powers of mimicry on a living re-creation of their foibles and mannerisms. I recall the witty sallies which Papa used to make, both with company and in the bosom of his family; nor could discontent and sullen peevishness persist for long beneath the warmth of Mama's gay, serene and kindly smile. Those were hours and days when I was truly happy.

How different is everything which surrounds me here at St Gilgen. The people who enter my husband's house seem artificially subdued, just as the violins' natural brilliant sound may be muted to play some soft passage. All day the villagers come to consult Berchtold about their problems. Some peasant whose hayloft has been set on fire will ask him to find the culprit; a gamekeeper wishes to catch poachers, or a village girl is searching for the father of her child born out of wedlock. Berchtold gives them all his grave attention, and they respect their local magistrate because he is known to deal justly and without bias. They respect and perhaps even admire him, but I am sure they can feel no affection for him. The Baron will administer

the law for them, will do whatever is necessary; but it is a relief, their expressions say, to walk out of his office, out of that cold forbidding presence.

My husband's routine is precise, punctilious, unchanging. The minute the grandfather clock in the hall strikes eight, he comes into the dining-room and sits down to breakfast. At noon lunch must be ready for him, and at six o'clock punctually he expects his dinner. Our meals are mostly eaten in silence. If I try to please him by putting a few flowers on his desk or preparing one of his favourite dishes, he will accept it as a matter of course, without saying a word. But he is no less sparing of words when something angers him: if he receives a reprimand from the Minister of State in Vienna, if some dessert to which he was looking forward has been spoilt in the kitchen, or if Leopold cries too loudly.

I know that Berchtold despises me, despises everything about me, and I have come to suspect that the mighty Baron only decided to marry me, the aging spinsterly daughter of a commonplace musician, in order to prove his superiority to aristocratic prejudices. That he did so, although I was poor and had a 'slip' in my past, was to show both to himself and to the world how splendidly magnanimous he was. My confession before marriage that I did not love him only made him the more eager to compel my love through the force of his character. For my part, I cannot believe he will ever come closer to me, or that I shall ever have other feelings towards him than utter indifference.

I have my son, whom I cherish tenderly; otherwise I could scarcely endure the icy lovelessness of my married life, the monotony of my daily round, and the mournful stillness of the house—a stillness only broken by the soft and ceaseless plashing of Lake Wolfgang's waves against the quiet shore. How much I miss Bimpy's barking—the little dog died a few weeks ago. It is something that I still have my dear faithful Teresa here, to remind me of my old life and of happier times.

On the rare occasions when I have visitors from the outside world, the world of Nannerl Mozart, Berchtold is always extremely correct and pays due regard to the external forms. But when after five or ten minutes he leaves us on our own I can easily sense my visitors' relief. They try hard not to show it, but it is quite patent from their changed manner and a freer note in their voices.

Thus it was in the early autumn when the loyal friend of th Mozarts, good old Andreas Schachtner (he must be about fifty-five now, and is still the same inveterate bachelor), came to see me at St Gilgen on his return from a month's holiday in Vienna. In the thirty-five years since our worthy Court Trumpeter joined the Archbishop's orchestra, I do not think he has ever taken so long a vacation, certainly not outside Salzburg. He had much to tell me of the novel experiences he had met with in Vienna: a city full of rich and elegant people, where you could eat exquisite food and drink precious old wines in luxurious restaurants, where every night you could attend concerts, performances of operas, dramas, French farces, or marionette shows. But as Herr Schachtner discovered, there are also landlords and chair-bearers, not to mention loose women, pimps and procuresses, all waiting to empty the pockets of an honest Salzburger unversed in such rogueries.

The main purpose of Schachtner's journey to Vienna was to offer Wolfgang the German translation of *Idomeneo*, on which our worthy Court Trumpeter has been working intermittently for several years, and which he had at last completed. Wolfgang promised to consider it when he had time, but I fear that the German version of *Idomeneo* can have gained very little of his attention. Poor Schachtner was naturally disappointed, and though he is far too modest a man to complain, a little of his disappointment crept into his voice when he spoke of it.

'As I can well understand', he told me, 'Wolfgang is totally under the spell of his new opera, and he even honoured me by playing a few parts from it for my benefit. A comic aria for bass voice in the first act, a minuet, a duet for baritone and soprano. If I may judge from these, Baroness, then I would venture to assert that your brother has reached a peak of mastery such as few other composers have ever achieved. Your dear father would have been proud indeed to hear this opera, but although there is much in it of wickedness and profligacy, it is concerned above all with life and death, and "the last things". It may well be that Wolfgang is writing into it all the sadness his soul has contained since his father died.'

Herr Schachtner spoke these words very quietly as if remembering old times. 'And the wicked profligacy?' I asked.

'During the last weeks, Baroness', he replied, 'I have reflected much on Wolfgang's character, and one thing has become clear to

me. Had he not had the inestimable advantages of your lamented father's upbringing, he would have become the same reckless libertine and villain as he now portrays in *Don Giovanni*.'

I found Countess Lodron in tears. Whenever I drive to Salzburg, I make a point of calling at the Lodron Palace to pay her my respects. She is an old woman now, and the days are past when she would travel to Munich or Vienna to take part in magnificent court receptions, when she was frequently to be seen at the Archbishop's Residence. Since her younger daughter, Amelia, also left her a few months ago to get married, the Countess has leaned more and more on my old friend Sally for comfort and affection; and the beautiful Antonia Lodron, once so much the centre of Salzburg society, has become a lonely figure who seldom emerges from her house.

I believe my sporadic visits are one of the few connections she still retains with the outside world, and we usually sit in her boudoir for an hour or so, chatting over the trifles of news we have gleaned since we last saw each other. I tell her about my little son and my famous brother, while she escapes into memories of past splendours.

But on this last visit I felt that nothing was further from her mind than gossip, idle recollections, or the exchange of civilities. The manner of gracious hostess is natural to her, but now she could sustain it with very little conviction, for the tears were repeatedly trying to break through. Since she did not tell me of her own accord, I did not wish to pry into the cause of her distress, but decided to take my leave rather sooner than usual.

Then the door quietly opened, and Louisa Martinitz stood before us. She too had tears in her eyes, and looked ashen pale. She came towards me, embraced me, and then amidst sobs, with the incoherence of great grief, she told me she had left her husband and never wanted to return to Prague.

After the triumphant first night of *Don Giovanni*, the kindly Count Schmolik had given a reception, at which Louisa became the involuntary witness of a scene between Martinitz and Josepha Duschek. Perhaps to be alone for a few minutes, she walked unsuspectingly into the small sparsely-lit salon where she had opened her heart to Wolfgang a few months before. Her husband and the other woman were sitting on a couch with their backs to the door, whispering

excitedly, and did not notice her entrance. Louisa's first impulse was to retire, but irresistibly, against her better judgment, she felt drawn to stay and listen.

Josepha declared to Martinitz that their affair was at an end: she had made up her mind to go on an extensive concert tour, and to free herself from all that bound her heart. The Count implored her not to discard him; he protested his extreme love, and his inability to live without her. She was his whole life, and he would follow her wherever she went, wherever she wanted him, as her coachman, her servant, anything . . . but Josepha remained adamant. 'He was like a man possessed', said Louisa, 'and as for her, I could never have imagined such pitiless scorn.' In the end Martinitz broke down completely, whimpering and sobbing that he would never, never give up hope. He went down on his knees to her . . . it was more than Louisa could bear. She stole out of the room, left the house, and wandered miserably through the streets of Prague. For a while she stood at the old Charles Bridge, and looked down into the muddy water of the Vltava. It seemed to be calling her, dragging her down to it, bidding her finish everything there and then. But suddenly her head cleared. She had made up her mind what to do.

The next morning Louisa crept out of the house without leaving a word of explanation, and boarded the coach for Salzburg: she would return to her mother. Beyond any doubt all her love for Martinitz had been killed, and her only wish was to forget as quickly as possible that cruel scene when she had seen him prostrate, humiliated, abject, at the feet of the rival she hated yet admired.

What could I say to all that? Not for the world would I have hurt one who has always been so loving to Wolfgang and to myself. Yet was it not I who had introduced Josepha and Martinitz, and had thus become the unwitting instrument of Louisa's present unhappiness? But every word of explanation or apology would have sounded clumsy and banal, and I felt I could help mother and daughter better if I tried to distract them, so after a suitable pause I enquired after Wolfgang, his experiences in Prague and his new opera.

Louisa began to talk, at first wearily and with little spirit, so that I often had to interrupt her or put questions to her. But soon her words began to flow more freely, and before long I observed to my joy that she, and Countess Antonia too, seemed to have forgotten

everything except *Don Giovanni* and the remarkable occurrences connected with it.

In some mysterious way the opera became a legend in Prague long before the public had heard a bar of its music; and in September, when Wolfgang, Constanze and Da Ponte arrived there for the rehearsals, they found themselves the centre of a host of sensational rumours. The radical reforms of the Emperor in Vienna, the King of Prussia's death, the danger of unrest in France, the birth of a new nation in America, were no longer topics for heated discussion among the inhabitants. The world outside Prague had ceased to exist for them, and even their own city signified exclusively the progress of *their* opera.

Yes, they told each other in excitement, Mozart had arrived with only half a score ready, and he was not only rehearsing with the singers during the day, but working most of the night on new arias, duets and ensembles. Yes, he had quarrelled with the renowned young singer, Signor Bassi (already a great favourite of Prague's sighing maidens), who was to sing the part of Don Giovanni. Bassi had demanded that he be given the 'register aria', which Mozart had written for the rascally servant Leporello. This of course aroused the fury of Signor Ponzinelli, who was to sing Leporello, and there had been several unpleasant scenes. Yes, the citizens recounted smilingly, Bassi and Ponzinelli had even come to blows.

They talked too about the strange friend of the authors' who had arrived in Prague, the famous Chevalier de Seingalt, Giacomo Casanova, at present librarian to Count Waldstein in his castle at nearby Dux. The Chevalier stayed at the Blue Star Inn, demanded the best suite, a continual supply of choice food and selected wines, and informed the landlord that he was the guest of honour of Messrs Mozart and Da Ponte. When the landlord discreetly asked the two 'hosts' about the truth of this last statement, they regretfully confirmed that they were prepared to guarantee the Chevalier's bill.

Casanova soon felt very much at home in Prague, and went round telling everyone in the strictest confidence that he was the true author of *Don Giovanni*, and that only his position as former Ambassador and Papal Secretary of State prevented his publicly acknowledging his authorship. Naturally he claimed the privilege of watching the rehearsals.

At one of the first rehearsals he attended, the Chevalier enquired of Da Ponte, 'What did you say, Lorenzo, was the name of the manager of this opera-house? Bondini—it sounds familiar to me, but I cannot quite place it.' He thought for a moment or two. 'Bondini—of course! Now I have it. 1767 or '68, I fancy. In Verona, or perhaps Padua. Teresina Bondini, an opera singer; an exquisite tender little blonde soubrette with raven-black eyes and the softest, most delicate skin, melodious bell-like laughter and small well-rounded breasts, firm as the first apples in August! Yes, I remember her indeed. She owned some harmless insignificant husband who also had something to do with the theatre. I was on my flight to Austria, so of course I could not linger. But I still had time for one fleeting adventure. We had an intimate supper, we kissed and fondled for an hour or two, and that was all. The next morning I was obliged to hasten on my way, and could not even bid her farewell. How she must have mourned me all these years! She has thought about me all the time, no doubt. I must see my delightful little Teresina immediately."

Madame Bondini was called at once, and when she appeared the Chevalier was momentarily speechless. Either his memory had played him a scurvy trick or the intervening years had sadly marked his delightful little Teresina. There was not much left of the tender blonde with the raven-black eyes and delicate skin. Instead of a soubrette, she was the company's efficient promptress and wardrobe-mistress, while as for the firm apples of August—the Signora was rotund and voluminous, a mountain of a woman. Concealing some inner amusement, Da Ponte presented her to his friend, who had swiftly regained his composure, and now kissed her hand most gallantly, assuming the famous seductive smile which no woman could ever resist. 'May I be so immodest as to presume', he said, 'that the gracious lady still remembers me?'

The gracious lady seemed embarrassed. 'What was the name, Abate?' 'Seingalt, Signora', replied Da Ponte, 'the Chevalier de Seingalt.' 'Verona or Padua 1767', added Casanova helpfully, but Madame Bondini remained perplexed, and her expression indicated that one met so many people as one grew older, one could not possibly remember all of them.

Casanova drew himself to his full height, put his lorgnette to his eyes, stared hard at her, and announced solemnly: 'I am Casanova,

Giacomo Casanova, and some twenty years ago, Signora, I had the pleasure of enjoying your company for a short while.'

Madame Bondini regarded him with astonishment. 'What!' she exclaimed. 'The infamous Casanova—the one who escaped from prison in Venice? But, good heavens, I am sure you must be well over ninety!' She laughed, but not the melodious and bell-like laughter which Casanova had recalled; it was a thunderous and reverberating laugh which made the very walls shake. She turned and addressed her husband, who had just joined the small group: 'Can you remember, Pasquale, our ever having encountered the Chevalier, somewhere in Verona or Padua?' Bondini shook his head.

Red with fury, Casanova drew a perfumed handkerchief out of his shirt-sleeve, put it to his nose, and turned haughtily away. To retrieve an embarrassing situation, Da Ponte began a discussion with the Bondinis about how the stage setting should be changed in the second act from a garden at night to the brilliantly lit banquet hall. He was highly diverted by the failure of Casanova's recognition scene, and at the Blue Star that night he could not resist teasing his former master in the amorous arts.

'A plague on the old bitch!' the Chevalier kept repeating and aped Madame Bondini's voice: 'What was the name? . . . The Casanova who was in the Venetian prison? . . . But you must be well over ninety. . . .' He banged his fist on the table. 'She cannot remember Casanova, she has forgotten the embraces of the greatest lover the world has known. As if it had been a mere petty adventure with some low touring actor! I'll be even with the hag yet!'

At the following morning's rehearsal he sat with Da Ponte in the dark theatre, and called out to him in authoritative tones, very much the master to his disciple: 'Hey, Lorenzo! I have just been reading the posters, and I see that the part of the young and innocent girl Zerlina is being sung by a person called Bondini. You don't mean to tell me it is the same hulk of a woman who imposed herself on me last night?'

'By no means,' smiled Da Ponte. 'It is her daughter, the charming seventeen-year-old Catarina. Giacomo!' he exclaimed in sudden dismay. 'You don't intend to . . . you're not going to. . .?'

The Chevalier raised his lorgnette. 'Seventeen, you said, and charming. Of course I'm going to, my good Lorenzo. Of course I intend to!'

And in fact, at the next convenient opportunity during the rehearsal, he made his first approach to the fair Catarina. She responded, and later he was whispering sweet nothings in her ear, expatiating on the magnificence of his past, and begging her to keep secret their delicious and tender encounters. Then he invited her to supper in a private room at the Blue Star, and reported proudly to Da Ponte that there were still pretty creatures happy to accept his advances.

There is no proof at all that the next scene was Da Ponte's doing, but one may well assume that it was he who informed Madame Bondini of the secret rendez-vous: whether to deal his former master a blow or to prevent further disturbance of rehearsals is a matter of no importance. At any rate the result was that just as Casanova, entertaining the young lady to truffled goose-liver and dry champagne, saw ahead of him a delectable few hours *à deux*—the door of the private room burst open, and the girl's mother appeared on the threshold.

'My dear Casanova', she greeted him, 'how can you forgive me for having forgotten you for a moment? Of course I remember everything quite clearly now. You were the charming elderly gentleman with whom I had supper once in Verona some twenty years ago. Or was it Padua? You were so amiable then, so—paternal. And now you are here with this little apple of my eye, and honouring her with your kind attention, your fatherly benevolence—or should I say grandfatherly? It is noble of you, revered Chevalier, since I fear that at your age such youthful company must be slightly tedious to you. I have therefore come to join you and to share my Catarina's pleasure.'

With that she sat down at the table, cut herself a substantial portion of goose-liver, and poured out a glass of champagne. 'I am sure we shall have a most agreeable evening', she smiled, 'for I propose to make the most of such an occasion. Catarina, my dear, may I give you some more champagne?' She raised her glass. 'Chevalier', she pledged the toast, laying unmistakable stress upon the last word, 'to your glorious—past!'

Thus ended, to all intents and purposes, the 'Bondini affair', one of Casanova's less satisfactory adventures, which, I believe, will hardly find a prominent place in the memoirs of his life that he is now writing in Dux.

A fortnight before the first performance, just when the work was at its most strenuous, Da Ponte received a dispatch from Salieri in Vienna demanding that the Court Theatre Poet leave Prague immediately and return for the rehearsals of their new opera *Tarare*. Wolfgang was furious. 'But *Tarare* isn't to be given for several months yet', he cried, 'and you, Lorenzo, are only the translator! Why does he call you away?' Da Ponte fumed too: 'The damned scoundrel! He knows he is powerless against *Don Giovanni*. All he can do is rob me of the pleasure of witnessing our triumph.'

The next morning he embraced Wolfgang, who accompanied him to the mail coach for Vienna. 'My work on *Don Giovanni* is done', he affirmed. 'Book and score are complete, and the overture you can certainly finish without my help! I have got to return to Vienna lest I give that rascal Salieri the chance of intriguing against me with the Emperor and trying to prevent the performance of *Don Giovanni* in Vienna. No, our opera does not need me any more; it will live and shine when Salieri, and I dare say Da Ponte too, are mere empty names in forgotten musical encyclopædias. Goodbye, Wolfgang, and may all good fortune attend our *Giovanni*!'

The coach started moving, and the Abate leaned out of the window once more. 'The overture', he called. 'Let it be of your best, Wolfgang!'

But the days went by, and Wolfgang never found the time to sit down and write his overture. All day long he rehearsed the orchestra or the singers, and in the evenings he played at private concerts. Any spare moments he might occasionally find at the Duscheks' villa, where he was staying, were always filled with some new distraction. Bondini became impatient, but Wolfgang assured him that the overture would be ready for the dress rehearsal. But just when he intended to sit down and write it, Josepha bore him off to a wine festival in the neighbouring village of Melnik, which she said he simply must not miss.

So the night before the first performance there was still no overture on paper. Bondini and Guardasoni, his co-director, were in despair. This was quite unprecedented. But Wolfgang laughed: 'Leave me alone tonight: alone with Stanzi here. She will brew me some punch, and tomorrow you shall have the overture complete.' Bondini had to be content with that, but he must have spent a sleepless night—just as Wolfgang did.

Last autumn my brother's relations with Constanze had improved. She became quieter, and tried her best to make a real home for him and little Karl. When the invitation to Prague arrived, she cried and implored Wolfgang to take her with him. She was once more with child, so he agreed, and on this occasion she seems to have done him full credit. She was self-effacing during rehearsals, and wherever they went, she was gay and amiable, exerting all her charm and good nature towards making friends for them both.

On this night, then, she brewed a tureen full of punch, set it on the table, retired to a corner of the room, and busied herself quietly with some mending, while Wolfgang settled down to work.

He had three different overtures for the opera in his head: a light-hearted one in E flat major, a more robust, powerful one in C minor, and a tragic one in D minor; now he decided on the third. Draining two glasses of the punch, hot and strong and sweet, he said suddenly to Constanze: 'Stanzi, please talk to me.' She asked him what she should talk about. 'Anything', was the answer. 'Tell me a story, a fairy tale if you like. Otherwise I shall fall asleep, and that I must not do.'

So Constanze began to tell him children's stories and fairy tales, *Aladdin and his Lamp*, *Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves*, anything she could recall from the *Thousand and One Nights*; and as she talked the golden quill scratched softly and regularly across the paper. Page after page was finished, Constanze had long ceased her narration and returned to the mending, and at three o'clock in the morning Wolfgang's head sank on to the table.

'I can't do any more now', he declared, 'I *must* have an hour's sleep. Only an hour, Stanzi, so please wake me at four.' But four o'clock came, and she had not the heart to wake him. It was not until five that she pulled softly at his shirt sleeve. He rubbed his eyes, smiled at her, and picked up the quill once more. At seven the copyist appeared, took the finished score, and helped Constanze to bring an exhausted Wolfgang to bed.

'And twelve hours later', Louisa Martinitz concluded her account, 'Wolfgang arrived at the Opera House and took his place at the piano in the orchestra pit, to be greeted by excited acclamation. He smiled, bowed deeply, and gave the sign for the opera to begin.'

I asked her whether the audience had truly admired *Don Giovanni*.

'Admired!' She looked at me, and her eyes were shining. 'That is far too weak a word for what we all felt before that mighty, majestic

vision of love and death. There he stood in the orchestra, a short, pale, unremarkable-looking man, with shadows around his blue eyes; and from his appearance nobody could ever have suspected that sublime depth of feeling, that elemental beauty in his music.'

After the curtain fell, the audience were so spellbound that there were a few moments of utter silence—before the applause began. Rapturous, overwhelming, limitless applause. 'Never before has Prague heard anything like it,' wrote one of the newspapers next day. The following performances were all sold out to the last ticket, and were no less ecstatically received. Well might Bondini have sent a dispatch to Da Ponte after only the second night: 'Long live Da Ponte! Long live Mozart! All impresarios, all actors, actresses and singers, must bless these two men. So long as they live, nobody will ever hear anything of financial anxieties in the theatre!'

Such were some of the legends about *Don Giovanni* which Louisa Martinitz related to me in her mother's boudoir. After the opera's opening night, she had, of course, without knowing it, heard Josepha turning Martinitz away and thus fulfilling her part of the secret agreement with Wolfgang. Louisa had not the slightest inkling how closely her own destiny was interwoven with the new opera, and though it was very difficult for me, I had no right to say what I knew. I can only hope that one day her problems will be unravelled.

Wolfgang returned to Vienna with Constanze on November 14th. He had made up his mind to visit Gluck the following day, and ask him to put in a word for *Don Giovanni* with Salieri. If the Prague success could be repeated in Vienna, it would establish Wolfgang's position there once for all, setting him in the front rank of the great composers with Gluck and Haydn. But however irksome it might be to appeal to Salieri, his help was always needed because of his position as Court Opera Kapellmeister and his powerful influence with the Emperor.

At about three o'clock on November 15th Wolfgang reached the lovely house in Rennweg, the door of which the angelic Marianne had opened to him so many years ago. Just as he came to it, a coach drew up, from which two people jumped out. With great difficulty, aided by the coachman, they managed to bear into the house a heavily-built man, evidently unconscious: Gluck.

Wolfgang followed them, and when Madame Gluck hastily appeared, he offered her his services; she acknowledged the offer with a grateful sad smile, and then went into the bedroom where they had brought her husband. Within a few minutes the doctor arrived, and it was nearly an hour before he came out. When he did, Wolfgang, who had waited in the anteroom, took his leave of Madame Gluck, after renewing his offer of help, and walked down Rennweg with the doctor, who was very ready to inform Wolfgang of the position.

Seventy-three years old and exceedingly stout, Gluck had had several strokes in the last few years, and his medical advisers warned him that they could only preserve his life if he maintained a very regular mode of living, took the utmost care over his diet and abstained from any form of alcohol. At times he observed these rules, but often he had no hesitation in transgressing them. That day at noon two friends from Paris had come to see him, and Gluck was in the best of humours, joking with them and talking about new work. He told them proudly that in the course of his life the Paris Opéra must have paid him the equivalent of a million guilders in fees. Having eaten moderately at lunch and drunk only half a glass of wine mixed with water, he was looking forward to his usual daily drive to the Prater; he asked Madame Gluck to order the coach. The minute she had closed the door behind her, he poured himself a large glass of brandy, and drained it at a single draught.

That very evening at nine o'clock the Chevalier Christoph Willibald Gluck died, to be mourned by the whole of Vienna. The general sadness, though, was lightly diminished when the details of his testament became known. To his wife he left his entire fortune, worth millions of guilders in gold, silver, jewellery, houses and property; in a codicil specially enclosed, however, he decreed a bequest of one guilder to Vienna's Poor-house, one guilder to the General Hospital, one guilder to the Municipal Infirmary and one guilder to the University.

With Gluck's death the post of Imperial Chamber Musician and Court Composer fell vacant. It was something of a sinecure, but earned a yearly remuneration of two thousand guilders, as well as a position of distinction in society. Wolfgang might in any case have hoped to become Gluck's successor, and after the triumph of *Don Giovanni* in Prague even Salicri realised he could hardly prevent the

appointment. He did, however, succeed in persuading the Emperor that the salary which Her Late Majesty Maria Theresa had seen fit to decree to Gluck, for services rendered to the Imperial Court and in view of his dominating European reputation, would be wholly exorbitant for a young man like Mozart who had merely had one or two temporary successes to his credit.

At last, therefore, my brother gained the coveted appointment at court, but with a salary reduced by over half. It was a bitter blow for him. Two thousand guilders would have freed him from all financial worries; this, in comparison, was a more pittance. 'Eight hundred guilders!' he exclaimed scornfully. 'Too much for what I have to do, too little for what I could do.'

So once again he has begun to contemplate going to London. Nancy has written to him about the musical life there: performances of opera and ballet, symphony concerts, choral societies, and the whole rich field offering itself to his talents. Of course she dwells also on her own longing for her beloved Wolfgang, and her hopes of loading him with happiness in a new life. But before he can decide, Wolfgang has to await two events. One is Constanze's confinement, expected in three or four weeks now, and the other is the fate of *Don Giovanni*.

Da Ponte went to great lengths to get the opera performed in Vienna. He had an audience with the Emperor, in which he described the opera's beauty in the most glowing terms. He implored Salieri to be magnanimous, telling him: 'The world will thank you for having helped Mozart at the turning-point in his life.' Finally the Abate's efforts were crowned with success, and the Administration of the Court Theatres accepted *Don Giovanni*. The first performance is to take place in March or April, after Salieri's new opera *Tarare* has opened.

The position regarding Constanze is much more complicated. Wolfgang cannot think of leaving his wife until the child has at least been weaned, and until he can be certain of leaving her in reasonable financial security. But alas, since their return from Prague, Constanze has fallen into her old faults. The household is in incredible disorder; servants, engaged in the morning, leave in the afternoon without explanation, and there is no thought for regular meals. She stays in bed for whole days, and heaps accusations on Wolfgang that he is not even capable of earning their daily bread.

‘You will remain a starveling all your life, man! You will sink further and further into debt, you will carry all your belongings to the pawn-shop, as you have started doing already. Look at Salieri and Dittersdorf!’ she shouts at him. ‘They can live on a lavish scale; they all have private coaches with flunkeys in livery!’

‘They are just charlatans’, he returns. ‘Not serious at all.’

‘And what of Herr Haydn or the late Chevalier Gluck? Are they charlatans too in the opinion of the all-wise Wolfgang Mozart?’

My brother finds no answer to such reproaches, and often he will rush out of the house to join Da Ponte in excursions to the low and sordid taverns on Spittelberg, where they consort with all manner of loose women. His only redeeming relationship seems to be with Therese von Trattner, to whom he still gives lessons. Her house on the *Graben* is quiet and elegant, and a complete God-given contrast to all his surroundings at home. Frau von Trattner is slightly younger than he is, but exercises a soothing and almost motherly influence over him. It is clear that of all the people in Vienna Wolfgang still sees regularly, she is the only one who gives him what he needs most of all: understanding sympathy.

St Gilgen, middle of September 1788

SUDDENLY, after long months of silence, Sebastian Martinitz arrived in Salzburg, threw himself before Louisa’s feet in a frenzy of remorse, and begged her to forgive him and return to a new life, in which he would atone to her for the unutterable folly and cruelty of his past behaviour. The fervour and sincerity of his penitence melted Louisa’s heart, she forgave him freely, told him she had never ceased to love him, and consented to go back with him to Prague.

Last week they left Salzburg, accompanied by Louisa’s mother as far as Gmunden; and the three of them halted their coach at St Gilgen to spend a few hours with me. It was a gay and serene afternoon, and how agreeable I found it to hear the Countess Antonia laughing merrily, as if a myriad cares had all at once been lifted from her shoulders! She was soon asking me if I had heard the latest

Salzburg gossip—about her faithful Sally. Yes, Sally had been seen two or three times about dusk on lonely paths of the Mönchsberg—‘And with whom, do you suppose?’ asked the Countess in a triumphant rhetorical question. I could hardly believe my ears when she answered it: Sally’s escort was none other than our worthy poet and Court Trumpeter, good old Andreas Schachtner! I was delighted for both of them.

As for Sebastian and Louisa, holding hands and smiling at each other for all the world like bride and groom newly joined, I could well believe they were returning to Prague reunited for life. Sebastian had lost all trace of his former roué’s manner, and behaved to his wife with a touching devotion. To my secret amusement, they even spoke of Josepha Duschek as if she were one of their countless Prague acquaintances, and not the woman who had nearly destroyed their lives. Sebastian had sown his wild oats, and was now intent on becoming the pattern of a good husband; while Louisa looked radiant in her restored happiness. Out of her sorrow a great opera has been born, and it is fitting that a benevolent Providence should now reward her richly for all she has suffered in the past.

Providence, however, has been showing none of her favours to Wolfgang. Too often the private letters arrive, begging me to destroy them when read, a request so time-honoured by now that I scarcely need the reminder. Each time I receive one, I reproach myself again for leaving my brother, who means more to me than any other man in the world, alone and un comforted in the nadir of his distress.

It would not be too hard to free myself from my duties here for a few weeks, and I have tried to reason with Berchtold, to impress on him how much Wolfgang needs me. Two or three times I pleaded with my husband to let me to go Vienna for a month, and once I asked him to invite Wolfgang to St Gilgen. He did not attempt to argue with me, but merely shook his head with a merciless finality. I am sure that Berchtold harbours within him, perhaps unawares, a deep fear and hatred of everything Mozartian, because he senses that it is stronger than himself and will outlive him and his like, however much they seek to subdue it.

Don Giovanni has failed in Vienna. Even before the first performance word had gone round among the so-called initiated that what was good enough for provincial Prague was by no means good

enough for Vienna. Changes were made, Wolfgang had to write additional music, but it was all in vain. Despite the Emperor's personal patronage and Aloysia's magnificent singing as Donna Anna, the audience showed little enthusiasm.

After the performance Wolfgang walked through the warm starry May night with Joseph Haydn. The rich scent of lilac in bloom streamed towards them from the little front gardens, and the two friends were silently occupied with the same bitter thought: a great masterpiece had been rejected by the inhabitants of a town which prided itself upon its love of music.

'We shall never change them, Wolfgang', averred Papa Haydn, 'and we should do better to abandon them to their boorish arrogance, and shake the dust of Austria from our feet—go far afield!'

'Far afield?' said Wolfgang. 'Where to?'

'Into the world', was Haydn's answer. 'To Paris, to London!'

Wolfgang looked at him in surprise. 'You too, Papa Haydn? You would consider going. . .?'

'Yes', replied the old man. 'I wish to take off the livery I have had to wear for thirty years, appearing every morning with all the other servants at the levée before my Prince. I wish to be a man amongst men. Free, without ties! I wish to be Haydn and not just the Kapellmeister of Prince Nicholas Esterhazy the Magnificent. I wish to write the music I dream of writing, not merely that which may please my master.'

'But', observed Wolfgang quizzically, 'are you quite sure, Papa, that the music they like in London is the music you dream of writing?'

Haydn smiled: 'We composers who believe in melody, my son, are the noble race-horses of music. The contrapuntists are mere nags. I know the English understand horses, and I trust they will very soon understand the difference in music too!'

Wolfgang laughed at this, and the two friends began day-dreaming about a visit to London; for a while the evening's disappointment was forgotten.

Nor was all yet lost with *Don Giovanni*, for Aloysia and Da Ponte pleaded with the Emperor that it should be kept in the repertoire until Vienna changed its initial judgment. Joseph showed himself sympathetic, and told the Abate at a private audience: 'You are right, Da Ponte. *Don Giovanni* is a work of divine inspiration, better

than *Figaro*, I believe, but a hard bite for the teeth of my Viennese.'

'Then, Majesty', the Abate rejoined, 'we must give them time to chew on it.'

The Emperor laughed; and for a month at least *Giovanni* was reprieved.

Soon after this, Wolfgang's daughter Theresia died; she was only a few months old and, like all their children except Karl, had been sickly from birth. Going to England was out of the question now: Wolfgang could not possibly abandon Constanze at a time when the third of her children had died. Far from being able to leave her secure financially, he was already in sore straits for mere living expenses; and the reprieve for *Don Giovanni* had proved unavailing—there were few further performances.

To repair his fortunes, Wolfgang considered travelling to Prague. It was near enough to Vienna, they had always admired his work there and received him enthusiastically. Even when he learnt that Josepha had recently left Prague and gone to Germany on an extensive concert tour, he was not unduly depressed: it was unfortunate, but was he not popular enough in Prague even without her? Bondini had assured him of unfailing gratitude and support. He consulted Papa Haydn.

The older man looked at him with a sceptical smile. 'Wolferl, Wolferl', he said, 'I fear you still have much to learn in this business. Do not trust people so guilelessly, but make yourself independent of them if you can, and you will not be disappointed.'

'Now you are talking like my late father', laughed Wolfgang. 'All my fellow-men were villains, he used to tell me. He repeated this advice so long and so often, that one day I suddenly noticed I was quite alone in the world as far as true friends were concerned . . . alone with him!'

'Your father was not so mistaken, Wolferl. Believe me, Signor Bondini and most of your Prague admirers are just as false and fickle and ungrateful as the rest.' Wolfgang began protesting, but his friend cut him short. 'No, do not contradict me in too much haste. You had not been away from Prague a month before Signor Bondini was writing to me asking whether I would compose a new *opera buffa* for him.'

Haydn went silently to his writing desk, searched for a while, then

found a sheet of paper and handed it to my brother. 'Here is the copy of my reply. Read it!'

Wolfgang scanned the lines before him: 'You request that I write an *opera buffa* for Prague, but I would be very loath to risk pitting myself in rivalry against the great Mozart. If I could only inspire every lover of music, especially the mighty ones of this earth, with feelings as deep as mine on listening to Mozart's incomparable works, then surely all the nations would contend for the possession of such a jewel within their borders. Prague should strive to retain the treasure within her grasp, but not without fitting reward for him. The want of such a reward has saddened the life of many a great genius, and provides other such souls with little encouragement for further endeavour. This is a state of affairs which distresses me exceedingly, and I am indignant that the unique Mozart has not yet been engaged at any Imperial or Royal Court. Pardon my extreme vehemence on this subject, but I love the man too much.'

More and more frequently in Wolfgang's letters to me the ominous word 'money' appears. He knows I cannot help him, for I have scarcely a single kreutzer of my own, and to speak once more with Berchtold would be futile. I can understand why my brother does not turn to good friends like Haydn or Frau von Trattner for money; they must not be allowed to see how desperate is his present poverty. It would be too great a humiliation, and in their presence he tries more or less successfully to keep up appearances, and put a brave face on his troubles.

And so one day, driven by despair, my poor brother found a new use for the golden quill—which a friendly queen once gave him so that he might put to paper small black dots and strokes with the magical power of transmutation into rich and radiant sound. He wrote a begging letter. Overcoming his deep shame by a supreme effort of will, Wolfgang applied to a man called Michael Puchberg, a mere acquaintance—almost a stranger, a soap-boiler by trade. He asked very humbly, with effusive apologies for troubling him, whether Puchberg could possibly lend him a hundred guilders. Wolfgang was fortunate, for Puchberg seems to be a generous soul, and although not a rich man, sent him some money on account of a subscription concert which my brother is planning.

In this concert Wolfgang wishes to present to the public three

great new symphonies, all of which he has completed in a mere eight weeks. That is astonishing enough, but it becomes the more poignant when I remember the circumstances in which they were composed. The first, in E flat major, is gay and serene, although he wrote it while Baby Theresia was gravely ill. She died just as he finished it, and he began the second, in G minor, a work filled with dark yearning sorrow. It helped him to overcome the heavy loss. But then, most wonderful, he produced the third symphony, in C major, a radiant, festive hymn to life, which might still be lying before him full of hope.

Wolfgang's immediate plan was to pay for the journey to England out of the proceeds of the subscription concert. This was also to provide enough money for Constanze and Karl to live comfortably during the first weeks of his absence; later on, when he had settled in London, which should not take too long, he would send regular amounts to Vienna for his wife and child. Everything else, and particularly, the final dissolution of their shattered marriage, must be left to time and fate. Before he could come to a definite decision about his departure he had to talk to his Imperial master: he applied for an audience and asked Joseph to relieve him of his post as Court Chamber Musician, so that he might leave Vienna and go to London.

Joseph listened attentively. 'You are resolved on this course, Mozart?' he said in the end.

'With Your Majesty's gracious permission—I am firmly resolved.'

'Why?' Joseph's voice held a note of strange insistence.

'Because I am afraid to perish in Vienna', my brother replied. 'To perish as a musician and as a man. Because I must save myself while the time is still left to do it.'

A heavy silence ensued. Joseph, his head bowed, walked once or twice across the thick Turkish carpet, and Wolfgang followed him nervously with his eyes. At length the Emperor began to speak, slowly and with the hesitancy of a man who can see only one step ahead:

'Mozart, I do not wish you to go. Believe me: you can only create your music in Vienna. You know that Berlin is diametrically opposed to our way of thinking, in Paris a revolution is certainly imminent, and as for London. . . .' He paused. 'Yes, Mozart, I can understand your wish to go to England. You were happy there as a young boy,

and you have never returned, so you dream of regaining that happiness in some glorious Utopia. It is a fair dream but a deceiving one. Many things have changed in London since your boyhood, and you would never be at home there. Stay in Vienna, and I will help you as long as I remain alive.'

'As long as I remain alive', he repeated thoughtfully, and then, forestalling a protest from Wolfgang, 'Yes, I know about my state of health—better than all my doctors and advisers.'

According to rumours one is always hearing, the Emperor is an incurably sick man, dragging on his life from month to month with the aid of continual drugs and medicines. His former small circle of elderly aristocratic ladies have retired from court life, and apart from his ministers the only person of consequence to see him regularly is Aloysia Lange. Two or three times a week she enters the palace through a side-door, and a silent aide-de-camp brings her to Joseph's private room. Nobody in Vienna talks about their relations, except when Lange, Aloysia's wretched husband, makes tasteless remarks about his intimate connection with the Imperial Court. Whatever may be the truth there, I believe that it must have been through Aloysia's benevolent influence that the Emperor now said to Wolfgang: 'Will you reconsider your decision, Mozart, if I promise to help you?'

'To help me, Your Majesty?'

'Listen', the Emperor's tone suddenly changed. 'A strange episode took place the other day in one of my regiments in Croatia. Two officers, betrothed to two you - ladies of the district, having well-justified doubts concerning the ladies' faithfulness, decided to put this to the test. They pretended to be called away on duty, and took tender farewells of their sweethearts, only to return a few days later disguised as two foreign cavaliers. They approached the ladies, courted them, and in this disguise won their hearts a second time. . . . Well, Mozart, what do you think of it?'

'I do not quite understand, Your Majesty.'

'As the starting-point for an *opera buffa*.'

Now Wolfgang caught his drift. He hesitated: 'If I may say so, Your Majesty, I find it a little . . . unreal, frivolous, even cynical.'

Joseph smiled. 'As to your first epithet, I have told you that it did really happen. As to the other two—is not our whole world frivolous and cynical?'

'That may well be so, Your Majesty, but should it not be the task of music and the theatre to transfigure the world, to make it more beautiful?'

'In plain language, Mozart, you do not like the story?'

'I do not wish to judge hastily, Your Majesty. Perhaps when I have considered it further . . .'

'Very well', said the Emperor, 'consider it, discuss it with Da Ponte, and make your decision. If you accept the commission, the Administration of my Court Opera will pay you an advance of fifty ducats. You will receive a further hundred and fifty on completing the work.'

'Two hundred ducats!' the Abate kept repeating, when Wolfgang told him what had transpired at the audience. 'Two hundred ducats! I cannot understand you, Wolfgang. For months, as I am well aware, you have been struggling for a bare livelihood, borrowing money everywhere, waiting for some such commission. Now you are asked by the Emperor to write an opera; you are promised twice the fee one could expect. How can you hesitate? Can you afford to refuse?'

'No', agreed Wolfgang, 'of course I cannot afford to refuse. I am only saying that the story has no inner music for me. It is weak and shallow and unconvincing. You know that as well as I do.'

'No weaker, shallower and more unconvincing than a hundred other stories from which quite good and successful operas have been written. Let me meditate on it for a week or two. I have a feeling that we can make something good out of this trifle, something that will really take the fancy of the easily bored audiences who populate the theatre today. Moreover, I confess that it has definite attractions for me on three different grounds. They are very personal reasons, you may say, but for all that they might one day become important to you also.'

Wolfgang laughed: 'Very well then—out with your three reasons!'

'The first is this', replied Da Ponte. 'In *Figaro* and *Don Giovanni* I was merely altering or adapting a known play or opera, whereas here I could show the public my ability to produce something original.'

'A personal reason indeed; and one that savours of vanity.'

'I admit that, but would you blame me?' He smiled. 'Secondly, I wish to see my little sweetheart Adriana on the stage, in a part which

will establish her as the great Ferraresi. I believe this story could furnish her with such a part.'

'Vanity again', suggested Wolfgang. ,

'Admitted once more; though perhaps a more unselfish form of vanity.'

'Just at the moment I do not feel in the humour for discussing your unselfishness, Lorenzo. What is your third reason?'

'I am an old philosopher', declared Da Ponte a little portentously, 'and for once I would like to have my own philosophy represented on the stage. I would write a part with my pungent views on life and womenkind, their glittering looks and false tears and flattering words. I would expose Woman in all her fickleness and frailty.'

'Oh, vanity of all vanities', broke in Wolfgang impatiently. 'And because of these you would persuade me to accept a story when you are not convinced yourself of its effectiveness? Now consider, Lorenzo: both the works on which we have so far collaborated possessed themes that lifted them out of the ruck of ordinary operas. Behind *Figaro*, one could guess at an entire people waiting to throw away their chains and rise against their oppressors. Behind *Giovanni* stands the mighty all-conquering figure of Death. What stands behind this silly little fable of two officers and their two ladies?'

The Abate reflected for a few instants. 'An accusation, Wolfgang', he said at length. 'One which is two or three thousand years old, and still clamours to be heard. "Look", it says, "this is how women are. Any woman, one as much as the other—this is how they all behave. *Così fan tutte*!"'

'*Così fan tutte*!' Wolfgang repeated.

Next spring I am to bear another child. I pray it may be a girl this time, a little girl who can smile and be gay, who will belong to me alone. May the Almighty give her music, may He give her eyes to take in all the world's beauty, and a heart that beats for all the higher things in life. Dear God: let it be a Mozartian child!

A MONTH ago today my daughter Jeanette was born. From the very first hour of her life she had sweet little red cheeks and a gay satisfied face, just as if an amazing Providence had put into the cradle a breathing, crying, kicking miniature edition of my beloved mother. For hours and hours I look at her in silent delight, waiting till she opens her clear blue eyes or begins to cry for her feed. Often Berchtold stands at the bedside and looks at me while I feed her. As usual, he rarely speaks, but we both feel that a new reconciling power has come into our lives. I pray to the Almighty that this tiny little creature, whether Mozartian or not, may yet show us the way to go through life together in kindness and affection.

Leopold too will often stand next to my bed and look at his little sister, but I cannot discover on his face any sign of joy. He gives the impression of one who is lying in wait, estimating the powers of a secret enemy come to drive him from his rightful place. He will soon be four, and is still a very quiet though strong-willed boy, uncommunicative and often sulky. He has an intense admiration for his father, mingled a little with fear; he is already taking on Berchtold's grave features and ponderous manner. Sometimes Berchtold lets him stay in the office, and Leopold sits there good as gold, watching the peasants who have come to lay their problems reverently before their all-powerful administrator of justice.

Once or twice when going out shooting, Berchtold has taken the little boy with him. I watched them set off in silence, Leopold's feet hurrying to keep up with his father; and when they returned, they both wore the same calm, dignified expression, as if Leopold had been an adult ten times his own age. 'What did you talk about all day, out there in the forest?' I asked him.

He thought for a few moments and then replied: 'We do not talk, Mother. We listen.'

'Listen?' I said in surprise. 'What do you listen for?'

'For the deer, and the sound of the trees, and the water.'

During the time of my confinement, Teresa was wonderfully good to me. All day she ran up and down the stairs, reading every wish from my eyes, and looking full of a simple happiness when I smiled

at her in gratitude. Countess Lodron came over from Salzburg with Sally to be present at Jeanette's christening and bring my daughter her first little golden chain; and indeed I had many more kind friends at St Gilgen for the occasion—the Michael Haydns, Andreas Schachtner, the Hagenauers, with Ursula, her husband and children. (How fortunate she is, and how I envy her, having her parents still alive!) Ursula's brother was there too, Father Dominicus, who for some time now has been Abbot of St Peter's; and it was he who christened my daughter yesterday in our village church. In the short address he gave when blessing the child, he prayed she might have inherited both her father's high seriousness and her mother's gentleness, understanding, and love of music; that she might attain to that true serenity of soul of which the philosopher speaks when he says: '*In tristitia hilaris, in hilaritate tristis.*'

After the service we all sat on the terrace in the spring sunshine, looking down at the glittering waters of Lake Wolfgang, and drank a glass of wine, toasting Jeanette's future happiness. Uncle Hagenauer began teasing Andreas about the little poem which had no doubt been specially prepared for the occasion; and after the formality of a little persuasion, our Court Trumpeter rose with great dignity and treated us to a sonnet, in which he paid great compliments to Berchtold and myself, rhyming 'Jeanette' with 'dearest little pet' and 'the sweetest babe to grace St Gilgen yet'.

At the end of the poem we applauded him heartily, but instead of sitting down, he looked round the group on the terrace, coughed loudly and waited for silence, whereupon he continued: 'I have not quite finished, my friends. But in case any of you should be expecting further verse, you will, I fear, be disappointed. I rejoice to inform you, however, that what I now have to say, for which I shall confine myself to sober prose, will in fact contain more poetry than all my former work.' This remark caused a buzz of amusement and shouts of 'No false modesty'. Andreas stood very erect, coughed once more, and then announced solemnly: 'My friends, Fraulein Sally Joly, for many a year beloved and esteemed by us all on account of her gay disposition and charming laughter, has done me the honour of consenting to become my wife.'

Although their walks together up the Mönchsberg had remained anything but secret from Salzburg gossips, yet the pandemonium of congratulations and handshakes, embracing and hilarity, suggested

we had heard some startling and completely unexpected news. Indeed the expressions on the faces of Sally and Andreas, as they gazed lovingly across at each other, seemed almost to say: 'Haven't we kept our secret well!'

Nobody could feel greater delight in this announcement than myself, for I have known them both all my life. I think of Andreas' visit to our house in Drehgasse when four-year-old Wolferl wrote that famous concerto. I remember how he used to play marches and songs for us, how he was among the earliest to appreciate my brother's genius, and how later he tried again and again to write an opera libretto for Wolfgang. He never became angry when Wolfgang set aside his efforts, but retained his gentle, unselfish admiration, free from any trace of envy.

Nor can I recall a time when Sally and I were not close friends. Once she was a poor orphan who used to come to us for some of her meals. Then she became Countess Antonia's chambermaid, listening at keyholes and reporting to me the secret happenings inside the salons of the Lodron Palace. More recently she has been a devoted companion to the Countess, who will miss her greatly when she leaves to get married in the autumn. I do not think I have ever seen Sally downcast or miserable, and of course her loud, twittering laughter was a byword in our family. For twenty-five years Andreas has complained about this laughter, and often enough he used to beg us to remove 'this exceedingly tiresome child'. And all the time he did not know he was in love. In love with the noisy and continual giggling—in love with Sally! Now at last they have found each other, nor should I be surprised if this union of the elderly, poetic bachelor and the high-spirited, merry gossip did not produce the happiest and most satisfied couple in Salzburg.

I missed Wolfgang very sadly on this family occasion. After Jeanette's birth I had of course written inviting him and Constanze to the christening. He sent me heartiest congratulations, and said he would have loved to come to St Gilgen, but unfortunately he was setting out almost at once on a tour through Germany, which was to end at the Berlin court.

I was aware of the real reason for my brother's new journey: it was an attempt to escape from the seemingly endless chain of misfortunes which have harried him throughout these last months. Thirty-three

years old, at the peak of his creative powers, he is sunk in the lowest depths of human misery. The subscription concert on which he rested such high hopes has come to nothing, and some dark drawer of his desk holds the scores of the three symphonies he wrote last summer. I fear a miracle will be needed to bring them to light.

As for the new opera (which is really to be called *Così fan tutte*), scarcely any progress has been made. Da Ponte's initial enthusiasm soon waned; and with that Wolfgang's zest for the work, scanty in the first place, seems to have vanished completely. I suppose they will go on with it one day, for they accepted the Emperor's commission, and drew the promised advance. Wolfgang's part of it was quickly swallowed up; and a good deal must have gone into the pockets of a certain Anton Stadler, whose name has been cropping up with alarming frequency in Wolfgang's recent letters to me.

He is just the type of person whose baleful influence our poor Papa used always to fear so greatly. By profession a clarinet-player, among the best in Vienna, he is plainly a rascally creature with enough wit to fleece my naive brother out of his last kreutzer on the most extraordinary pretexts.

On one occasion, it seems, he told Wolfgang he had dreamt of a number which was certain to win first prize in a lottery the next day. Unfortunately he had not at the moment the necessary money to enter the lottery, so naturally Wolfgang had to pay two ducats towards the fulfilment of Stadler's dream: whether the number won or lost, that was the end of the two ducats for Wolfgang. Then again Stadler would maintain that he had met an Italian billiards player at a coffee-house, who was prepared to divulge the secrets of some amazing trick shots at billiards for a mere five ducats. Wolfgang did not, of course, learn the precious secret, but incredibly enough, however often he was cheated, he never learnt any lessons of common prudence, and Stadler has extracted more money to reward similar experts in skittles and chess—once even a dancing master with an alleged magic fluid infallible as an aphrodisiac.

Wolfgang will not have a word said against his crony. He considers it slanderous, dictated purely by envy; and he continues to give Stadler money. He even wrote a quintet for clarinet and strings, dedicated to Stadler, so that the scoundrel may perform it all over the country without, of course, paying my brother the smallest sum for his trouble in composing it. Really I cannot blame Constanze

for abusing Wolfgang furiously when she finds Stadler has tricked him again.

Constanze is once more with child, and her moody capriciousness and constant complaints have reached a pitch where they confirm every day Wolfgang's desire to leave her; so all his serious thoughts are directed towards earning a substantial sum which will enable him to provide for his wife and go to Nancy in London. This is the chief cause of his journey to Germany. Prince Karl Lichnowsky, a rich young Silesian land-owner who often travels between Vienna and Berlin, has offered to take Wolfgang in his coach, and introduce him to the new King of Prussia, who may offer him a post at court.

Since the death of Frederick II, much has changed in Prussia. The young King Frederick William II is a man of the world, extremely susceptible to the charms of the fair sex, but also a great lover of music and an enthusiastic player of the violoncello. In his capital there are daily concerts, *soirées* of chamber music, performances of oratorios and ballets; while Berlin's court opera is reputed among the best in Europe. In such a thriving centre of music surely my brother should find a small place where he can show his talents, where he can earn the money so essential to his future happiness.

Thus I pray every night not only that my sweet little Jeanette will grow up a true Mozartian child, but also that God in His mercy may at last grant the fulfilment of my brother's wishes. That amongst the many people he will meet in his new surroundings he may find some real and honest friends. That he may be protected from the dangers and temptations of headstrong folly, to which he falls a victim all too easily.

St Gilgen, beginning of July 1789

WOLFGANG has been back in Vienna for two or three weeks, but his expedition to Germany ended in further catastrophe, devouring all the money he possessed or had earned, and burying all his hopes. 'I am in a situation I would not wish my most wicked enemy', he writes now, 'and unless a miracle happens, I and my poor wife and child are most unhappily and innocently lost.'

Often I wake in the night, and wonder hopelessly for the hundredth time whether there is nothing I can do to save my brother from sinking into the abyss. What would Papa have done in my position? Would he not have discovered some means of helping his son? Would he not, ignoring all else, have at least hastened to Wolfgang's side?

Outside my window I can hear the waves of the Lake dashing softly against the shore, and for a while I become quieter. It is profitless exploring my conscience further, for what after all could I do? The few guilders I could possibly give Wolfgang would not even buy him the bare necessities of life, and how would it help him if I went to Vienna? For a week or two I might fuss around him, nagging and reproaching him for his dissipation and loose living, and admonish him how he must conduct himself in the future. I have no talent for playing the shrew, and Wolfgang would not listen to me for long.

No, I decided one night while sleep thus eluded me, there is only one person who could yet save Wolfgang, and that is Constanze. Either she must give him his freedom, let him go to London and begin there a new life; or else she must take the reins in her own hands, and as quickly as possible, with all the energy, sensibility and resolution she possesses, try to steer Wolfgang back to a more sober and regular mode of life.

It was in this strain that I wrote to her, begging her to forget any grudge she might possibly entertain towards me, and to unite with me in sisterly love to perform the one great deed for which Wolfgang would some day be grateful to us. Should she not feel strong enough, however, to carry so heavy a burden, then perhaps she might call in her sister Aloysia as our third ally in the struggle for Wolfgang's salvation. Knowing how easily my brother could be swayed for good as well as evil, I was confident our joint endeavours would be crowned with success.

Constanze's reply was cool and unhelpful. She thanked me for my loving care, the sincerity of which she recognised. She did not see why I should introduce Madame Lange's name, since there was nothing her sister could possibly do in the matter. Nor could she apprehend the drift of my suggestion concerning giving Wolfgang his freedom; he had never desired or requested such a thing, and she hardly thought it would be beneficial to him to be deprived of his

wife's constant love and affection. Of course she was well aware of his 'chambermaideries', and had never taken them seriously so long as they did not bring him into professional or financial difficulties. It was highly regrettable that 'this condition had not held good in Berlin, and the whole affair was the more painful to her because she had had not the slightest idea of it, and Wolfgang had all the time written the most tender love-letters to her from Berlin. As proof of this, to show how far male dissimulation could be extended, she enclosed a letter from which I could see . . . and so on and so on.

With me Wolfgang made no secret of his latest 'chambermaidery', and I was no less appalled than Constanze when I first heard of it—described in a detail which would have seemed utterly brazen in anybody less ingenuous than my brother. It was one of those stupid, thoughtless little adventures which bring disastrous, irreparable consequences in their train.

Wolfgang left Vienna in Prince Lichnowsky's coach at the beginning of April. They went first to Prague, where Wolfgang had a couple of talks with the unassuming but noble-minded Franz Duschek, and then continued on their journey as far as Dresden, where Josepha was nearing the end of her present concert tour.

She told him with joy of her new happiness with her husband, who, although he had known all the time of her relations with Martinitz, had never put any hindrance in her way. Being older and wiser, he had let Josepha follow her headstrong course, trusting that one day she would come back to him. His patient magnanimity was rewarded, and the day came—the first performance of *Don Giovanni*. So this opera, which sings the excesses of unrestrained lust, was responsible for bringing conjugal peace to two couples who are both lovable and both near my brother's heart.

Josepha introduced Wolfgang at the Dresden Court, and through her influence he played at a concert before the Elector of Saxony, who handed him a charming little snuff-box. Wolfgang thought that this was somewhat meagre remuneration until Josepha gave him a sign to open the box. Inside, to his astonishment, he found a hundred ducats—a sum he might have expected to receive for the score of an entire opera. Josepha had praised him very highly beforehand, and submissively reminded the Elector that the Court of Saxony was a traditional patron of great art. Admiring Wolfgang's composition

and execution, the Elector was very ready to maintain his court's ancient traditions.

Now that Wolfgang had a hundred ducats in his pocket, he had a grave decision to make: with fifty ducats he could reach London, and for his first weeks there another ten ducats would suffice; leaving forty ducats on which Constanze would be able to live for three or four months. Surely it would be best to go straight to England?

But Lichnowsky advised against it. Although, being in a hurry to go back to his estate, he would have to leave Wolfgang in Berlin, he assured my brother that the King of Prussia was eagerly expecting the great Mozart, and if the Elector of Saxony could present a hundred ducats, Frederick William of Prussia might be worth twice or three times as much, not to mention the possible appointment at court. They proceeded with their journey.

On the evening of his arrival in Berlin, he went for a stroll through the broad streets and avenues, many of them bordered with linden trees in bloom. He stood for a while in front of the National Theatre on the Gendarmenmarkt, observing the coaches driving up from all sides and the people thronging around the entrance. Curious to learn what the piece might be which was drawing such a large audience, Wolfgang looked for a poster and at length discovered an announcement of the evening's performance:

'In answer to heavy public demand, *Belmonte and Constanze* or *The Abduction from the Seraglio*, music by Herr Wolfgang Mozart.'

He smiled delightedly, entered the theatre and demanded a seat in the stalls. 'And what else would you like, pray?' the man selling the tickets enquired with some amusement. 'A gold watch perhaps? We are, of course, sold out, as always with this opera. The only thing I can let you have is a ticket for standing room.'

Wolfgang paid, and went into the audience, where he succeeded in wandering down into the vicinity of the orchestra pit. The atmosphere in the theatre could not have been better. Right from the opening most of the dialogue was greeted with uproarious laughter, and every musical number was received with rapturous applause, and had to be encored. The only thing which marred Wolfgang's enjoyment was a second violinist who sat three feet away from him, and whom he could not help watching. From the beginning of the overture onwards the poor wretch had scraped his way

through, paying little heed to sharps or flats, to the conductor or his fellow players. In the second act there came a moment when Wolfgang could bear it no more, and shouted furiously: 'D, you idiot, D! Not D sharp! Gracious Heavens—can't you read music at all?'

These exclamations caused no small sensation, and an usher was preparing to remove the interrupter forcibly from the theatre, when the conductor, recognising Wolfgang, just made himself heard in the general hubbub. 'Ladies and gentlemen', he yelled, 'Mozart is amongst us, Mozart is here!' A storm of applause burst forth, Wolfgang was dragged on to the stage, and had to bow to the audience over and over again. Only when they had seen their fill of him could the performance be resumed.

He was about to return to the stalls as unobtrusively as possible when he noticed in the wings the beautiful girl who had sung the part of Blondchen, with tears coursing down her cheeks. She was about twenty, and during the performance he had admired her charm and shapely figure more than her vocal artistry. He went over to her now, and asked her why she was weeping.

'Why do I weep?' she lamented. 'Dear God, I have sung so wretchedly all through the evening! And now I know that you are in the theatre, Herr Mozart, my throat feels as if it were laced up. Now I shan't be able to sing at all!'

Wolfgang tried to soothe her, took her hand and stroked it tenderly. 'Please calm yourself, dear Fräulein . . .'

'Baranius', the girl told him. 'Henriette Baranius is my name, Herr Mozart.'

'Good, good', said my brother. 'I have found you charming all evening, so you may set aside your fears. Yet to help you conquer them completely before the next performance, I will tell you what I will do. If I may, I shall come to your house tomorrow and we will have a cup of chocolate . . . '—he observed her with an expert eye, and saw that the young lady was not averse to his gallant advances—'. . . and then', he continued, 'we will work together a little on your part. What does Fraulein Baranius think about this?'

Blondchen's tears had ceased. 'Tomorrow, Maestro, and chocolate?' she said coyly. 'Why not tonight—and champagne?'

Two hours later Henriette nestled close to him in a crackling silky undergarment. Her fingers gently stroked his hair, passed slowly down the back of his head, across his neck. She took his head in her

hands and kissed him. Then, with a sudden sinuous movement, she slid down like a serpent against his body, to lie there at his feet on the rich deep carpet. Now it was Wolfgang's turn to stroke her glittering russet hair, as he knelt down beside her and kissed her. She drew him towards her on the carpet.

For that night, and the two following days and nights, they remained alone together in an unbroken idyll of passionate embraces. Henriette lived in a sumptuous little palace on the city's western outskirts, with rooms full of exquisite furniture, French clocks and mirrors, graciously built glass cupboards wherein reposed brilliant crystal and delicate china. Discreet flunkeys and chambermaids brought them food and wine, prepared warm baths for them, lit the fires in the high English fireplaces, and silently supplied everything required for their comfort. In the evenings, at about six o'clock, an elegant white coach stood in front of the house, and conveyed them to a nearby lake, by the side of which they walked for an hour or so in carefree mood, before returning to Henriette's magnificent house.

Wolfgang did not stop to ask why Henriette was neglecting rehearsals or performances at the Opera House. That was her concern, and so was the question of where the palace and the coach came from, and who paid for the champagne and the flunkeys. For the moment he cared for none of those things, but was content to enjoy the fairy-tale existence, to languish heedlessly in the enchantment of his Blondchen's embrace.

The third morning they were late. Outside the windows they could see the tops of the linden trees already adorning themselves with fresh green leaves. Abruptly it dawned on Wolfgang that the dream was over, and ordinary life must start once more. Henriette had to prepare for a journey, since she was leaving Berlin for a few days; but when Wolfgang enquired where she was going, her reply was indecisive: 'Not far . . . somewhere in the vicinity . . . near—Potsdam.' Would she be singing there, giving a concert? 'No', she told him with the same vagueness. 'No, not to sing or for a concert—but on a matter of business nevertheless.'

Wolfgang asked now how long she would be away, and when he should see her again. 'Oh, not long, darling. Can we leave it for about a week?' Wolfgang reflected, and was almost relieved. Yes, the dream was over, and it was high time for him also to attend to

business. He must visit music publishers, see the manager of the Opera House, and try his fortunes at court. He kissed Henriette on the forehead, smiled at her, and would have taken his leave—when in a low voice she asked him to stay a few moments more.

With her head lowered, looking down on the floor, she began hesitantly: 'Wolfgang, I want to ask you for something. It is not an easy thing for me to do . . . indeed it is very painful for me . . .'

Wolfgang did not prompt or interrupt her. He had not the slightest idea what she wanted.

'At the moment I am—how shall I put it?—somewhat embarrassed. Oh, nothing serious . . . no, it's only—er, well, money.'

'Blondchen, Blondchen!' exclaimed Wolfgang. 'But of course, darling. May I perhaps be permitted to help you? I should do so with the greatest of pleasure.'

She continued: 'I certainly should not have spoilt the memory of these wonderful hours we have spent together, had it not been an urgent necessity. Don't you feel yourself they were wonderful hours. . . ?'

'Unforgettable', Wolfgang interrupted lovingly. 'And now, please tell me—how much money do you need?'

Henriette was silent for a moment, then breathed: 'A hundred ducats.'

'A hundred . . . ducats?' gasped Wolfgang in incredulous horror. 'But Blondchen—that is . . . more than all I possess.'

'I said a hundred ducats', Henriette repeated, and suddenly her voice sounded hard and cold. Wolfgang dazedly pulled out of his pocket the snuff-box containing the money, and set it down on the table. 'Look, darling—ninety, ninety two. . . '

Seizing the box with a swift movement of her hand, Henriette turned and moved towards the door.

'But Blondchen', stammered Wolfgang, 'why—what are you doing? My snuff-box . . .'

'Adieu, Mozart!' she called to him. '*Amusez-vous bien à Berlin.*' Then she banged the door behind her, and was gone.

Wolfgang was stunned, and for a minute or two could not take in what had happened. Then he rushed out of the house, and began wandering aimlessly through the Berlin streets, hardly noticing where his feet were carrying him. He thought of Constanze, poor Constanze, once more with child, without money, alone in Vienna.

In a swift access of guilt he entered the next inn he came to, asked for pen, ink and paper, sat down and wrote to his wife:

‘My beloved little Stanzi,

I cannot write much to you today because I have to make some visits. I am only writing to tell you when I may arrive home. Perhaps I shall leave here on the 25th, at least I shall do my utmost. I shall be so glad to be back with you again, my love, and how could you believe, even suspect, that I had forgotten you? How could that ever be possible? You know my love for you. Yet, my dearest little wife, when I come back, you must look forward more to my person than to any money. But more about this when I see you. On 1st June I shall sleep in Prague, and on the 4th—with my darlingest wife. Eternally your friend and ever loving husband,

W. A. MOZART.’

Wolfgang’s mortification was bitter and complete. Just like his own Don Giovanni, he had yielded without hesitation to his baser nature, and now, like the Don, he was paying for his mistake. Only someone with boundless naivety could have spent three days in such a paradise without any thought whatever of where it would end. Anybody else would have tried to discover more about Henriette, and would quickly have learnt (since it was common knowledge in Berlin) that she was not only one of the city’s cleverest and most dangerous *cocottes*, but at present the King’s mistress.

Before this knowledge dawned on him, however, he was standing in the audience hall of the Berlin Royal Palace, surrounded by applicants of all sorts. Here was an old soldier who had come to ask for a pension, and there the widow of a colonel from the Silesian Wars seeking a place for her son among the court pages. A bird-seller from Bavaria hoped to sell the King some particularly lovely birds, and a Professor of Berlin University begged the royal patronage for his forthcoming history of the House of Hohenzollern. In the midst of them stood W. A. Mozart, composer from Vienna, who would appeal to His Majesty’s love of music and had dedicated to the ’cello-playing monarch a string quartet with a particularly thankful and not too difficult part for that instrument.

Frederick William II is a tall slim man of about forty-five. He entered the hall with two aides-de-camp, walked slowly from one applicant to another, and spoke a few words to each. Arriving in

front of Wolfgang, he addressed him cordially: 'I have heard of your arrival in my capital, Maestro Mozart, and I have also been informed of your great . . . personal successes . . .' (it seemed to Wolfgang that the King smiled significantly at his aides) ' . . . in my Opera House, I mean of course', he added after a slight pause.

Wolfgang bowed deeply, and handed the King the score of the quartet. Frederick William barely glanced at it, then passed it to one of his retinue. 'Thank you, Mozart', he said graciously. 'And before you take your leave of my capital, I mean tomorrow or the day after'—there was a light but unmistakable stress on the last words—'you may go to my Treasurer, who will pay you a special fee: shall we say, for services rendered to my court.' Wolfgang was about to stammer out his request for an appointment, a commission, anything; but the King had already turned brusquely away and moved on to the next applicant.

Everything seemed lost: the appointment at court, the chance of earning from the King enough money to plan his journey to England; and as for the special fee there would be little enough left after paying his expenses in travelling home—unless Henriette could help him or would return part of the money she had taken from him.

So Wolfgang returned to the little palace on the town's western outskirts, pulled the bell-rope, and waited. After a few minutes the door was opened to him by a flunkey whose face he seemed to recognise. Wolfgang tried to enter, but the impertinent lad, after barring the door, enquired haughtily what his business might be. 'My business is with your mistress', snapped Wolfgang. 'Kindly show me in.' 'Your name, Sir?'—and Wolfgang, seething with impotent fury, gave his name. The flunkey departed, leaving him standing in the street, and returned five minutes later. 'Mademoiselle Baranius is not available', he said; and shut the door quickly in Wolfgang's face.

So now Wolfgang is back in Vienna, in this situation which he would not wish his worst enemy. He sits at his writing desk just as he did in the days before his departure, and writes to Puchberg, the soap-boiler: ' . . . my very sad position . . . hampered in every possible way from earning money . . . five hundred guilders please . . . repay ten guilders monthly . . . your friendship and love . . . forgive me for the sake of God . . . '

In one of his most desperate moments Stadler came to him. First

Wolfgang tried in vain to recover some of the money he had lent to his clarinet-playing friend; then he asked for a small loan. But Stadler drew out the lining from the pockets of his breeches, showing there was nothing there; and Wolfgang cried in despair: 'Is there no way out, Stadler, is there no one who can help me?'

The clarinettist scratched the back of his head: of course there was *somebody* who could help. Not the most agreeable type of person, certainly, but one you could rely on in an emergency. A money-lender.

'A usurer, Stadler?' cried Wolfgang. 'A usurer! No—no! That would drag me deeper and deeper into misery. Never!'

But Stadler calmed him down: it would not be so bad. Of course a person who lent money to a stranger was not commonly a benefactor of mankind. But on the other hand, what else was left to us when we could not go on any more, and our friends refused to help?

And so he brought my brother into the house of a man called Franz Hofdemel.

St Gilgen, 25th March 1790

LAST month the Emperor Joseph II died. I was eleven when I saw him for the first time at Schönbrunn, and I shall never forget how handsome he looked then, as he smiled at me with those very clear blue eyes, and called me *Mademoiselle*. But nor shall I forget how cold his words were when I last saw him, begging him to permit my marriage to Franz.

He was a man truly called among his subjects 'The Unloved'. For though all through his life he courted love, he could not give *himself* generously, and so he never won it. He was often enthusiastic for a time, but then his enthusiasm would wane because of his fear of the consequences; and it was like this for the whole of his reign. He wavered continually between despotism and democracy, reforms and emergency measures, enlightenment and censorship, even between politics and art, Italian and German opera. What will endure out of all his hopes and ideas and reforms? He himself never knew whether his place was at the beginning of a new epoch or the end of an old one, and after his death this question is still unanswered.

It was only by a supreme effort of will that he remained alive in the last few weeks. He coughed ceaselessly, became as thin as a skeleton, and subsisted almost entirely on goats' milk. His doctors at last reluctantly admitted to him that a catastrophe might occur at any time, upon which he began to plan systematically the end of his life. He worked without pause all through the night, producing countless memoranda for his ministers and for his younger brother Leopold, who would be succeeding him, sending farewell letters to his other brothers and sisters and a few friends. At the end he refused to see anybody except the court domestic servants, declaring with a sad smile: 'I cannot bear the frightened faces of those who enter this room.' He died without pain, in a state of quiet resignation.

Our new Emperor, Leopold II, is reputed to be a man of limited intellect and capabilities. From his boyhood he has stood in the shadow of his brilliant brother, and now Fate has set him in a position from which he can give orders without fear of contradiction. Immediately he ascended the throne an upheaval began at court, in the state administration, in the whole of public life, such as few would have deemed possible a few months ago. All those who had played important roles under Joseph were either dismissed by his successor or swiftly induced to retire of their own accord. Leopold was little interested in music, and considered his brother's patronage of opera as needless extravagance. He decided on radical economies in this field, and an early victim of his decision was the Poet to the Imperial Italian Court Theatre, the Abate Lorenzo Da Ponte.

Last week, before leaving Austria for good, Signor Da Ponte came here to see me—at Wolfgang's particular request. He arrived at St Gilgen in the early afternoon and spent the rest of the day with us: how wonderful it was to meet this friend of my brother's, about whom I had heard so much! No woman could remain indifferent to Da Ponte, I am sure: she would either dislike him heartily, or be charmed and fascinated, as I confess I was myself.

I could see too that Berchtold was quite unusually impressed by our guest's elegance, good manners and wide experience; it is, I think, the first time my husband has shown real interest in anyone coming from the Mozartian world. He brought out of the cellar a bottle of the finest Tyrolean red wine, and although we had not been warned beforehand of the Abate's coming, we had time during the afternoon

to prepare a special dinner for him—fish from the Lake, tender roast venison garnished with bacon, and the first ducklings. He did full justice to food and wine, on both of which he paid us graceful compliments; and he told us about the Vienna he had left, with few regrets; about his future plans—he is on his way to Trieste, where he has some business interests; and of course about Wolfgang.

First of all he reported on the fate of *Così fan tutte*, which had its first performance the last week in January. Vienna looked forward to the new opera with great interest, since it was common knowledge that the idea for it had been supplied by the Emperor himself.

At the opening night, therefore, everyone was rather disappointed to see the Royal Box empty, particularly as the rumours concerning the Emperor's health had become more disquieting than ever. Adriana Ferraresi conquered all hearts as Fiordiligi, several of the scenes were greeted with much laughter, and some of the numbers had to be repeated. But the applause at the end was only moderate, and on the whole the audience felt cheated: the whole story was too down-to-earth and topical for them, insufficiently romantic.

'The majority of mankind', Signor Da Ponte explained to us, 'consider love with all its effects as nothing but a more or less useful commodity of every-day life. But when they see it portrayed as such on the stage, they lose their normal cynicism and protest furiously against this sacred passion being turned into a laughing-stock; in a word, they refuse to find it funny. I credited the audience with too much sense when I wrote *Così*. I woke them from their childish dreams, and they did just what children do when you wake them up: they began to howl. No, Baroness', he continued, turning towards me, 'I am afraid I do not believe that even the graceful sparkling gaiety and the noble melancholy of your brother's score will be able to save our work. In Vienna it is to be given eight or nine times and no more. The newspapers which did not wish to hurt us, but were also loath to make us conceited, called it "most agreeable"—a polite but decisive death sentence. . . .'

The Abate continued his tale. One morning soon after the Emperor's death, Wolfgang encountered Salieri in the offices of the court theatre. 'I suppose your time will begin now', the Italian remarked casually. Wolfgang laughed: 'Don't you believe it, Herr Kapellmeister. Any change is for the worse.'

Bonbonniere returned a hypocritical laugh, but there was a glint in his eye. 'Any change is for the worse', he reflected, as he went to a private audience with the new Emperor to discuss economies in the theatre; it was only too easy for him to pass on Wolfgang's remark, as a preliminary step towards getting rid of my brother—and Da Ponte as well.

Leopold II probably knows nothing about opera intrigues and doubtless regarded the obsequious Salieri as a despicable creature who should have been among the first to be sent packing; only you cannot very well dismiss a man who had come to do you a service. But this other wretch, Da Ponte (he must have reflected), who already had the Venetian authorities on his tracks, who despite his priest's clothes enjoyed loitering with whores in low inns, who wrote opera librettos which glorified revolution, lasciviousness and female infidelity. . . .

The Emperor turned to Salieri, so the story has it, and ordered firmly: 'Da Ponte must go—at once.'

Salieri made a deep and reverent bow. 'And Mozart, Your Majesty?' he asked softly; he had already made suitable references to Wolfgang's improvident way of life and the scandals which the man's debts were provoking.

'Mozart?' said the Emperor. 'Of course this will be the same Mozart who came to Florence with his father nearly twenty years ago, and played before me with Nardini. I believe I heard his name again only the other day. Ah yes, my old friend Baron van Swieten—he was always infatuated with music—wrote to me suggesting that "the famous and extremely deserving Court Composer and Chamber Musician W. A. Mozart is the worthiest among Your Majesty's subjects to be appointed Court Theatre Kapellmeister".'

'That old miser van Swieten will have his reasons for acting as Mozart's patron', Leopold continued. 'Perhaps he lets Mozart work for him, and wants me to pay the bill. Well, that plan shan't succeed, and if the impertinent young man thinks any change after Joseph II is for the worse, I shall make him swallow his words. But I cannot dismiss him completely; it would be like an affront to van Swieten. Well, perhaps we can let things rest for a while as they are.'

He looked at Salieri: 'How much salary does Mozart receive?'

'Eight hundred guilders, Your Majesty.'

'Dear Heavens', exclaimed the Emperor: 'a mere pittance! Not

worth mentioning at all.' And turning to Salieri, he announced: 'Mozart remains—for the moment at least.'

The Italian bowed: 'As Your Majesty wishes.'

At ten o'clock the following morning Da Ponte arrived as usual at his office in the court theatre administration. He opened the door and stood as if petrified: at his desk sat Johann Thorwart! The villainous Thorwart, former theatrical wig-maker, pimp and black-mailer, the Weber girls' guardian, with whom Da Ponte had had more than one brush already; indeed it was only a few months since he had threatened a assault on the man should he again catch him running after Signorina Ferraresi.

'Thorwart!' cried the Abate; and later on he was furious at having been unable to hide his astonishment. 'Thorwart—what in Heaven's name are you doing here?'

Thorwart rose to his full height, his little vulture-like head quivering on his long neck. 'Da Ponte', he said slowly, savouring every word, 'I have to inform you that our gracious Sovereign no longer requires your services. You may go.'

The Abate protested: 'I was engaged by the late Emperor in person, and I shall only accept my dismissal from his successor in person.'

The human vulture laughed loudly at that, and told him that he had no chance whatever of an audience with the Emperor. Da Ponte saw he could do nothing, and had turned to leave when Thorwart flung at him the final insult: 'And by the way, Signorina Ferraresi asks me to tell you that she wishes to be rid of your importunities. She has made her plans for the future—in which you are by no means included.'

Da Ponte slammed the door, and ran down the stairs in a murderous fury. The beautiful Adriana had been the first to turn against him; having heard of his dismissal, she had betrayed him swiftly and without scruple. With all the instincts of the successful *cocotte*, who knows at once when a man is on the decline or when his star is in the ascendant, she had naturally thrown in her lot with the rascally Thorwart—since at the moment he was undeniably prospering. How like a woman! *Così fan tutte*.

Quite suddenly the rage of the former Court Theatre Poet subsided, and he saw that it was not a tragedy at all, but even slightly

comical. He remembered Alphonso, the old philosopher in *Così*, whom he had always considered his own mouthpiece as far as women's love was concerned; and as he sauntered down the street with a new calm, he hummed Alphonso's aria:

'Ah, the faithfulness of women,
Like the Phoenix—never doubt it—
Everybody prates about it,
But where to find it no man can say.'

There was a minute of silence after the Abate had concluded the story of his disgraceful dismissal. 'And now, Signor Da Ponte', I said at length, 'you have turned your back on Vienna, and my brother is alone.'

'No, Baroness', was his reply, 'Wolfgang is not alone, and I hope we two will not be separated for long; so much we have promised each other. At the moment—I trust I may talk to you candidly—he is in dire straits for money. Please do not ask me to go into greater detail, for these things are difficult to explain, and may seem scarcely credible to persons like yourself or the Baroli, whose lives are so far removed from the hurly-burly of Vienna and especially the theatrical world.'

I said I was aware of many of my brother's difficulties, and asked about the household; upon which Signor Da Ponte began to speak of Constanze. He could not make up his mind whether he should despise or only pity her. Last November her fifth child, a little girl, was born, and had died the same day. This left her prostrate in mind and body; she stayed in bed more than ever before, her fits of weeping were more frequent and prolonged. As she had done on previous occasions, she departed for Baden, a resort near Vienna, to recover; and Wolfgang was relieved to see her go. At least he hoped to find concentration for work during her absence, and to bring his affairs into some sort of order.

'But you told us Wolfgang was not alone, Signor Da Ponte?' I observed.

'I meant, gracious lady, that there are still several men in Vienna with whom your brother is very closely involved. For the sake of simplicity I could divide them into two groups, the good and the bad. Herr Puchberg, of course, belongs to the first group. He has not much money himself, and each time he gives any to Wolfgang, he

emphasises that this is the very last time he will do so. But the next time his heart is touched, and he gives again. Fifty guilders, a hundred guilders—he helps because God has given him the understanding to recognise Wolfgang's greatness. There is also Franz Süssmayr, a young man whom Wolfgang has taken as pupil. He is correct, even pedantic; certainly not a genius, but stubbornly devoted to his master. And then there is Primus.'

'Primus? Who is he?'

'A man called Joseph Deiner, who is boots at the Silver Serpent, an inn near the Mozarts' lodgings. A loyal soul, proud to be nicknamed Primus. A great lover of opera, the staunchest admirer your brother ever had, he has found the best possible outlet for this passion of his: he became the leader of the claqué at the opera theatre. You know—that small group of enthusiasts whose function it is to applaud after every aria or duet, and after each fall of the curtain. The singers pay them for their services, and the applause may range, according to the amount paid, from kind, strong and fervent, to thunderous and phrenetic. Of course Deiner firmly refuses to take any money from Wolfgang. "It would be"; he says, "like asking for a reward from the Almighty every time one prayed." Yes, these are indeed the good people round Wolfgang.'

'And the bad, Abate?' I asked.

'Stadler for one', he answered. 'That clarinet-playing rascal who will stoop to any depths to sponge on your brother. The other day he learned that Wolfgang had received a hundred guilders from Puchberg. An hour later he arrived at the Mozarts' lodgings to demand half the money—and even threatened to commit suicide if Wolfgang refused him. Of course he got the fifty guilders. Another time he stole pawn-tickets from Constanze's kitchen cupboard and sold them. . . . He must owe your brother as much as five hundred guilders, but at least he plays his instrument well, he is quite gay at times and knows how to amuse Wolfgang when he wishes. So I suppose there are redeeming features to Stadler—but Hofdemel. . . .'

'The usurer?'

Da Ponte nodded gravely. 'By far the worst of all the leeches and vampires which prey on poor Wolfgang's blood. He will lend five hundred guilders and force Wolfgang to sign a document promising to repay eight hundred. Wolfgang pledges to Hofdemel his future salary as Court Chamber Musician, and every month the poor wretch

falls further and further into this scoundrel's diabolical power.'

I was horrified. I had not realised things had taken quite so catastrophic a turn, and even Berchtold, who had been listening silently as always, frowned angrily at this last revelation.

'You mentioned Baron van Swieten a little while ago, Abate', I said. 'Is he one of the good group or the bad?'

Da Ponte reflected a moment. 'That is a very difficult thing to say, gracious lady. He is a genuine admirer of your brother's work, and has periodically enabled Wolfgang to earn small fees by arranging and orchestrating some of Handel's oratorios for the Baron's private concerts. Yes, if there is one man in Vienna who could help Wolfgang a great deal, it is van Swieten, before whom all doors open.'

'Then why in Heaven's name does he not give that help?'

'Because at heart, I am afraid, he is a very mean man: one who will help those in need only if he can expect something in return. No, Baroness, we cannot possibly assign him to the good group, though I hesitate to include him among the bad.'

We were silent for a minute or two once more. 'And what are your own plans, Signor Da Ponte?' I asked.

'I shall look around in the world and travel, gracious lady. I do not know how long they will permit me to stay in Italy, but the world is larger than Italy. There is France, for instance . . .'

'France, Signor Da Ponte!' broke in Berchtold, raising both hands in dismay. 'Don't you read the newspapers? Don't you know that terrible things are happening in France, and that the revolution is gaining ground every day?'

The Abate did not appear too disquieted. 'This so-called revolution will not be so bad as all that, Baron.'

'And the storming of the Bastille, Abate? Have you not read about it?'

'Exaggerations of the newspapers, my dear Baron. Mere exaggerations. Still—in case I should find France unsatisfactory, I might try England.'

'Or even America, Signor Da Ponte', Berchtold suggested with a laugh.

'Yes, Baron, why not? Perhaps even America.'

Berchtold shook his head and gave it up.

Shortly before he departed, Da Ponte confided to us what had occurred when he took his leave of my brother. Wolfgang produced

the golden quill which the Queen of England had presented to him over twenty-five years ago, and handed it to the Abate, saying solemnly: 'I commend it to your trusty hands.'

The Abate took from his pocket the red Morocco box (I had not seen it for several years), opened it, and placed it on the table. With shy reverence I looked at the quill which had written *Figaro*, *Don Giovanni* and the three forgotten symphonies, but also the begging letters to Puchberg and the promissory notes to Hofdemel.

'What is it my brother wanted, Abate?' I asked. 'Why did he give you the quill?'

'He wishes to save it, gracious lady, and I am to help him do so. These last weeks he has had to sell almost all his possessions or else put them in pawn. He has clung to the quill till now because he believed in it as a charm: while he had it, he would not perish utterly.'

'And that is why he has given it away?'

'Wolfgang knows the man to whom he has given it', Da Ponte replied with great dignity. 'In my care the quill is safe from Constanze's extravagance, Stadler's malice and Hofdemel's greed. When Wolfgang comes to London, it will open the door to St James' Palace and to the Queen's heart. Whatever my fate may be, Baroness, I make the same promise to you as I made to him. I shall carry the quill wherever I go, and keep it, just as he asked me, in trusty hands.'

The following morning an astonishing thing happened. I was sitting on the terrace looking at Jeanette in her cot, when Berchtold came up to me and said with an unusual hesitancy: 'Nannerl. . . .'

I looked up at him. 'Yes?'

'Here is a hundred guilders. I should like you to send them to your brother as a gift.'

I looked at him in amazement, and rose, preparing to go to him. But he held me at arms' length and continued grudgingly: 'Mind you, I am doing this against my better judgment, and he must not know that the money comes from me. But when I saw that quill and heard what Signor Da Ponte told us . . .—his voice tailed away, and he began walking back towards his office.'

I am with child, and expect to be confined around November.

Schachtner and Sally have married, and never would one find a

prouder, fonder wife than Sally, or a kinder, more considerate husband than our dear local poet.

And yesterday the Salzburg newspaper contained the following short notice: 'We regret to announce the recent death from cholera of Colonel Franz d'Yppold, at his regiment's headquarters on the East Galician Border. Colonel d'Yppold comes from a well-known Salzburg military family, and some years ago he was stationed in our town as a member of the Imperial War Council. He was unmarried.'

Salzburg, 20th December 1790

ON 20th November our little daughter Marie was born; she is a weak, ailing child, who needs our entire love and care. To save her from the icy cold of Lake Wolfgang during these winter months, and to be near a reliable doctor. Berchtold and I have moved to Salzburg with the whole family.

Every morning about ten o'clock Dr Barisani arrives to examine her, and usually gives her strengthening medicine, with some encouraging words for me. The other day he had his twelve-year-old granddaughter with him, Elizabeth Molk, poor Resi's daughter, who is being brought up in his house. Many times some phrase or gesture of hers reminds me of her mother, when Resi and I were just that age. What a lovable and sunny-natured girl Elizabeth is, and how much love her parents would have lavished upon her had they lived!

Old Frau Adlgasser, our former Cathedral Organist's widow, having moved to the home of one of her daughters in the country, is renting out to us her comfortable apartment near the Residence. During my confinement, and even now, my faithful Teresa has been on her feet from five in the morning till nearly midnight, so that the household may run smoothly; and I am sure it is some reward to her that we now entertain as in my parents' day. For I find a circle of my old friends gradually forming around us, people who seem acceptable even to my taciturn and reserved husband.

It is wonderful to see Uncle and Auntie Hagenauer again almost every day, sometimes with their children or grandchildren. Ursula

Haffner has become very stout, and though she is amiable enough, we cannot as matrons quite renew our girlhood friendship. But it is pleasant to watch her son Benedict growing up. He is fifteen now, and a good-looking lad, though he already exhibits all the pride of the Haffners! My dear Court Trumpeter Schachtner and his wife hold hands most of the time and gaze at each other in blissful content.

Then there is old Countess Lodron, who comes to see us from time to time; she will be having a new grandchild in the near future, pleasant evidence for the continued happiness of Louisa and Sebastian Martinitz. The Countess also tells us about the Archbishop's increasing misanthropy. His Residence shows very few vestiges of the ostentation in which he used periodically to indulge. It is a drab, sad place these days, inhabited by a near-recluse, who no longer cares what Salzburg might think of him, though he retains his interest in philosophy and his passion for music. Michael Haydn has still to compose violin duets for him from time to time, but they have never again been 'Mozartian in style'!

Michael looks the same healthy peasant as he always did, with his nose redder than ever. The other day he told us that his brother would be passing through Salzburg on the way to London, 'And as', said Michael, 'he will certainly have much to tell you concerning Wolfgang, would you give me the pleasure of coming to my house for a little *fause*?'

When we arrived, we found not only the great Joseph Haydn, but also Mr Salomon, the famous London impresario, who is a native of the Rhineland. Three months ago Salomon was on a visit to his parents in Bonn, when he learnt from the newspapers of the death of Haydn's master, Prince Nicholas Esterhazy. Salomon made up his mind very swiftly, went to Esterhazy, and offered Haydn a contract to come to London; he caught the great composer in the right humour for his purpose. Haydn had long dreamed of going to London, where he felt he could write the music he really wanted. The Prince's death was a good occasion for freeing himself from his court livery, and also from his nagging wife ('that infernal beast' as Michael Haydn called her) and his domineering mistress, Luigia Polzelli. With Salomon guaranteeing a fee of twelve hundred guineas, Haydn scarcely hesitated in his acceptance of the offer.

He embraced me with unaffected cordiality on our arrival, shook

Berchtold's hand warmly, and with little preamble plunged into the subject of which his heart was so full: Wolfgang.

First he spoke of the journey to Frankfurt which my brother had lately undertaken to attend Leopold II's coronation there as German Emperor. Since nobody at court had deemed it necessary to invite the Imperial Court Chamber Musician, Wolfgang, hoping to profit from the important occasion by playing at concerts for high fees, decided to travel to Frankfurt on his own account: Hofdemel provided the eight hundred guilders required for the journey, and Wolfgang meekly signed the usual document promising to repay a thousand.

For the first weeks of his stay, having taken quarters in a suburban inn, he led a very retired life, completing a piano concerto in honour of the coronation. But he was only able to arrange the concert where the concerto was to be played for the week after the main festivities had ended, and by that time most of the visitors had already departed from Frankfurt. Altogether the results of his enterprise were very meagre, and he returned to Vienna yet once more with empty pockets. 'He would have saved himself much trouble, expense and disappointment', Papa Haydn concluded, 'had he not made the journey at all.'

'Herr Haydn', I said at this point, 'I am convinced there is no man alive today who takes a stronger interest in Wolfgang's welfare than you do, or who offers him more sincere understanding.' The Kapellmeister looked at me with his shrewd but kindly eyes, and nodded gravely. 'Please be candid with me, his sister', I continued, 'when I now ask you a question. We two love him and understand his greatness; what can we do to help him overcome his faults and shortcomings?'

'In my eyes', asserted Herr Haydn, 'Mozart rises above all faults and shortcomings.' And he went on to give the most loving yet the clearest description of Wolfgang's character I have ever heard: 'His creative genius soars in the clouds, so far transcending the rest of us that he must necessarily remain lonely. But God has not given him the disposition to accept this loneliness; he fights against it, and, rejecting the grandeur of being alone, he comes into conflict with an external world which is blind to his greatness. I often marvel at the differences between him and myself, and at our mutual understanding despite those differences. He is primarily a dramatic composer,

while my realm is the symphony; he is exultant, unrestrained, bubbling over, while I am sedate and composed. I believe he likes me for my equanimity, while I am assuredly drawn to *him* because of his wild restlessness. I have known how to count my money since I was ten years old and earned my first kreutzers as a choir-boy; but Wolfgang has not learnt even now that you should turn a guilder over six times before you change it. At twenty he was an accomplished master, whereas at nearly sixty I feel more than ever how much I have still to learn. And then there is the matter of women. When, for instance, I think of the Chevalier Gluck, who discovered his life's happiness in a single woman, I reproach myself for veering between my wife and mistress, without finding true satisfaction in either. But as for Wolfgang, he is like his own Don Giovanni:

"Chambermaids and city ladies, baronesses and countesses, womenfolk of all conditions, every type and every grade." You know Leporello's aria, I expect, gracious lady?"

I nodded, and Herr Haydn paused a moment as if reflecting. 'Yet somehow', he resumed, 'Wolfgang has undergone a change during these last years. Behind his plain, insignificant exterior lurks a passionate, almost demonic element, and sometimes there is a majestic vision, beyond our common nature, to be seen shining in his eyes. Indeed I have wondered whether Wolfgang may not be starting to turn away from this world . . .'

'How could that be, Herr Haydn?' I interrupted in perplexity. 'Turning away from this world, with a whole catalogue of chambermaids and city ladies, baronesses and countesses?'

The old Kapellmeister smiled sagely: 'There are so many opposing facets to Wolfgang's character that I doubt if any woman, especially a loving sister, could hope to take them all in. He can be devoted or faithless, he will show now the noble courage of an aristocrat, now the simple pettiness of a common citizen. Many admire the brilliance and clarity of his thoughts, yet some believe he is naïve and foolish. He speaks four languages, can write a pretty poem, has read his philosophers; and there are those who call him uneducated. Sometimes he is soft and sentimental, but on occasions he will be ruthless and hard. Often he plays the buffoon, but to those of us who know him it is clear that dark tragedies are being performed behind that mask. He is a quick and fluent composer, writing whatever is

demanded of him: today the most sublime sounds ever conceived by the human brain; and tomorrow cheap dance music and pieces for the hurdy-gurdy. The other day, however, when Constanze implored him to write "popular stuff" and asked him for whom he claimed to be composing, he replied haughtily: "For the few who understand me—and for myself!" There are times when he is wrapped in melancholy, brooding over his fate, living on dry bread and black coffee, or the remains of food from the tables at the Silver Serpent which are brought to him by his friend Deiner. Then he will fall into the other extreme, and overeat grossly, swallowing in quick greedy mouthfuls a dozen liver dumplings, two chickens, a whole chocolate cake; and emptying two bottles of wine at the same speed. And so by his irregular and unruly way of life he is systematically ruining a constitution already undermined by two very powerful influences.'

I had been listening intently. 'You mean, Herr Haydn. . . ?'

He nodded seriously. 'Yes, Baroness, I mean the merciless comitance of heavy work and rare relaxation to which your father exposed him in his youth, and also the cruel alternation of external and internal anxieties which have beset him since his marriage. Nothing can save Wolfgang but an immediate and radical break with all his surroundings.'

Such were the distressing conclusions at which Herr Haydn had arrived during the last days he had passed with my brother. I turned to the Kapellmeister's friend: 'Is that your view too, Mr Salomon?'

'Yes, gracious lady', he replied, 'and I have agreed with Herr Mozart that he shall go to London under the same conditions as Maestro Haydn, after the Maestro has returned.'

'After Maestro Haydn's return!' I exclaimed. 'Forgive my bluntness, Mr Salomon, but why not now, immediately, today?'

Salomon shrugged his shoulders: 'Haydn and Mozart in London at the same time? No, Baroness, I am convinced that would be somewhat excessive for the musical powers of my fellow-citizens there. This is also the reason why I advised your brother—and I assure you there are no sinister motives behind my advice—to refuse another offer which he received from London, and to await Herr Haydn's return. Only then might he achieve a true success at the English capital.'

Salomon's words had the ring of conviction, and I had no reason

to doubt his sincerity, particularly as I knew Papa Haydn would never do anything to Wolfgang's hurt.

On 15th December, the day fixed for Haydn's departure, my brother arrived at his friend's house. 'Don't go, Papa', he pleaded in great sadness. 'Don't go! You do not know enough of the world, you have not been any distance from Esterhaz for a whole lifetime, you do not speak any languages . . . I have an ugly feeling that we shall not see each other any more.'

Haydn smiled: 'Don't be foolish, Wolferl! My language is understood all over the world, and you need not fear that anything will happen to me!'

Wolfgang looked at him uncomprehendingly: 'Afraid?' he stammered. 'Afraid that something might happen to you, Papa? No—I did not mean it in that sense.'

Haydn guffawed, with his loud, healthy, countryman's laughter. 'Well, then, in that case everything is all right!'

But Wolfgang was still as in a trance. 'This is the farewell, Papa', he said. 'The farewell!'

St Gilgen, 1st May 1791

LAST week poor little Marie died.

She had been growing weaker and weaker, so in the middle of last month we brought her home, placed her cradle near the window in front of the Lake, and prayed that she might be strengthened by the clear bracing air blowing across the water from the mountains. For hours I sat at the cradle, and my first look went to the child every morning. When I saw her still breathing, I had a moment's intense relief, as if waking from a nightmare, and would close my eyes to say an *Ave Maria*. At night before going to bed I would touch her hot damp forehead once more, haunted by the thought that I might be doing so for the last time.

In those days my husband lost all his equanimity, so much did the little creature's misery sadden him; and if I once hoped that time and my loving care might at length bring the two of us closer, today this hope, along with many others, lies shattered in the lowest chamber of my secret heart.

Now Marie is dead, and our house lies quiet and joyless—as it ever did. Berchtold scarcely speaks to me, less even than in normal times, but continues to go about his magistrate's duties with a mournful, vexed mien, which must put the villagers still more in awe of him. Leopold is strong and robust, yet a boy from whom springs no lightness, laughter, frankness. My angel-Jeanette is now beginning to utter her first 'Papa' and 'Mama', and in hours of utter despair it sometimes comforts me a little to set her on my lap and gaze at her in silence. Otherwise my life goes slowly, inextinguishably on its course; I know not to what direction or purpose.

We buried little Marie in the graveyard which surrounds the parish church. Father Dominicus came again, to stand at my side in this sad hour. His parents were with him, also Ursula and Sally with their husbands, and Countess Lodron. We stood round the grave, Father Dominicus spoke the blessings, and then all my friends returned to Salzburg. When we came home, I went straight back to my room, opened the window, and for a few minutes looked out over the Lake. Then I took out the big red book, and began reading through the pages, which are slowly turning yellow.

I feel quieter now. Soon I shall go down, prepare our evening's dinner, and sit down at the table with the sad, silent man whom life has bestowed on me as partner.

St Gilgen, end of October 1791

I AM tormented with anxiety over Wolfgang.

How is it possible, I keep thinking, that a human being whom God has blessed in such full measure with sublime creative power can fall so swiftly and fatally into decay? After Haydn as well as Da Ponte had gone, my brother succumbed more and more to a dismal apathy. He passed his days aimlessly, now going to see some obscure pawn-broker, now playing a game of billiards or skittles with Stadler, visiting Puchberg to thank him for the latest small loan, sitting for an hour or two in the Silver Serpent, where the pathetically devoted Joseph Deiner would serve him with a double helping of bread soup; or giving Süßmayr a lesson in counterpoint so as to

have fifty or sixty kreutzers in his pocket. Such was the tenor of Wolfgang's existence last spring.

A few months ago I was musing sadly on how completely most of the public had forgotten him. Hardly anybody of this generation would remember the famous infant prodigy, and even *Il Seraglio*, which had won such acclaim nine years ago, now seemed a relic of the past. True, Wolfgang's Masses were sung in churches throughout the country, but who knew the composer? Music-lovers might gather round their stands to play his string quartets, but their delight was confined to their private circles. *Figaro*, *Don Giovanni*?—I could not but recall the lines I had heard Emanuel Schikaneder pronouncing as Hamlet in our little Salzburg theatre: 'For the play, I remember, pleased not the million: 'twas caviare to the general. . . .'

Caviare to the general!—Schikaneder—suddenly another thought flashed through my mind, and I knew at once what I must do.

In the *Wiener Diarium* I had read about the success achieved by Schikaneder, who, having won the favour of Viennese audiences as both author and actor, was now manager of the Theater an der Wien. The magazine referred with discreet zest to his luxurious and dissolute life, gallant adventures, champagne feasts and nocturnal excursions into the Prater; so our old friend had evidently become a personage of great consequence, while remaining the lovable rascal we had known.

I remembered the gay, exhilarating evenings we had spent with him, his apparently sincere friendship with Wolferl, and his ridiculous yet endearing repetition of 'brother o'mine' every fourth sentence or so. At first I could not understand why Wolfgang had not long ago sought to revive the connection with his old crony, or why for that matter Schikaneder had not taken the first step. But knowing both men, I found an explanation which seemed highly plausible: perhaps the Imperial Court Chamber Musician would not stoop to ask a favour from the comedian-director of a suburban theatre; and perhaps the performer of such well-loved farces as *Foolish Anton* and *Kaspar the Bassoon-player* regarded the composer of *Figaro* and *Don Giovanni* as a person affected with strange and certainly most unpopular views concerning art and the theatre.

But supposing they were brought together again?—I decided to take positive action and play Fate myself. I wrote to Schikaneder begging him, if he still had any feelings in his heart for his former

friend, to go and see Wolfgang; to try to help him in some way or other, best of all by giving him a commission to write an opera for the Theater an der Wien.

Ten days later I received his reply, and it seemed as if my letter could hardly have arrived at a more auspicious moment. Schikaneder wrote that the times in Salzburg spent with the Mozarts were among his dearest memories, which he often called to mind to sustain him in periods of dejection. He thanked me extravagantly for the suggestion I had given him, and informed me that he and Wolfgang were already deep in plans for a new German 'magic' opera.

It appears that he received my letter in the early morning, and almost as soon as he had read it, set off without more ado to surprise Wolfgang at home. Striding into my brother's room, he found him still in bed and half asleep. 'Wolferl, Wolferl, brother o'mine!' he shouted in the utmost delight; and Wolfgang, rubbing his eyes, looked up dazedly at this strange apparition from his past. 'Well', declaimed Schikaneder, 'do'st thou no longer recognise my face? Ye Gods, have mercy on this wretched mime, whom now, alas, his truest friend disowns!'

Wolfgang laughed: 'Schikaneder, you old idiot! Stop acting for a minute or two, and tell me why you have burst in here in the middle of the night.'

'I need your help, brother o'mine—and I am lost unless I have it at once.'

'What!' cried Wolfgang incredulously. 'You must be passing rich, with people throwing money at you all the time and crowds flocking to your theatre. Yet *you* need help from a poor devil like me? How did this suddenly happen?'

'Not suddenly, Wolferl, by no means suddenly! Do you too believe all the stories you read in the *Wiener Diarium* about the millions I make? During these last six months I have scarcely managed to mend one hole without opening up another. Nobody throws money at me these days, and nobody flocks to my theatre. It is half empty, and unless I can find some money soon, I shall assuredly have to close down.'

Wolfgang laughed at this. 'You need money and—I repeat—you come to me of all people, the poorest wretch in the whole of Vienna. Truly you have knocked at the wrong door!'

'*Au contraire*, brother o'mine, only you can save me. If I can excite

my wealthy patrons with prospects of a new opera by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, I shall certainly get the four or five thousand guilders I need.'

Wolfgang felt much less sanguine: 'I don't believe the public which frequent your theatre would care to see a real opera. All they want is to laugh and be entertained.'

'And they have a right to that,' declared Schikaneder, 'even in an opera. *Our* opera need not be an old-fashioned one with Greek gods and heroes and so on. Other objections?'

'Well, in the second place, everyone has long ago forgotten your Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart.'

Schikaneder smiled: 'In that case we shall bring him back to their memories. Anything else, brother o'mine?'

'Thirdly—have you a book for this opera?'

Schikaneder pulled a bundle of papers out of his coat pocket. '*Here* is the book of our new opera. I wrote it myself.'

Wolfgang sat up in bed. 'You . . . you wrote an opera yourself?'

Of course our old friend had not precisely *written* it, any more than he had written *Hamlet* for our Salzburg theatre; he now admitted to Wolfgang his method of 'writing'. He had taken the basis of the story from Wieland's fairy tale, *Lulu or The Magic Flute*, embroidered it with motifs from the sensational French novel *Séthos*, introduced situations from a German tragedy *King Thanos*, and then inserted all manner of jests and comical trifles which had already rendered good service in *Kaspar the Bassoon-player*. Realising that all these ingredients would not yet be adequate to his purpose, he handed over the whole gallimaufry to a man called Giesecke, a member of his company, and asked him to manufacture out of it the libretto for an opera.

This Giesecke, at present possessed by the devil of the theatre—it is his greatest delight to paint his face as a player and stand forth on the stage—is reputed to be a remarkable person: highly intelligent, well-read, schooled in the sciences, with literary propensities, and an ardent disciple of the great French philosophers of our time. The muddled magic fairy-tale with which he was supplied seemed just good enough for him to imbue it with his own ideas of humanity, fraternity and love—much against Schikaneder's will.

Wolfgang read the book with mounting interest: it had what he called inner music, drama, humour, spectacle, everything he demanded from a libretto. Above all, however, even more than the

hundred ducats Schikaneder promised him, it was the loftiness of Giesecke's conception which decided my brother's eventual acceptance of the project. After an intermission of nearly three years, he would sit down at his desk and begin work again on a new opera.

One afternoon in August Teresa came in to announce that a lady wished to see me; her name was Signorina Luigia Polzelli. 'Joseph Haydn's mistress!' I thought, and at first felt disinclined to meet her. But I am very glad now that I changed my mind in time, and thus enjoyed for an hour or two the company of this vivacious dark-eyed beauty. Having taken advantage of Haydn's absence to dissolve her connection with him, she was now on her way back to her native Italy, where she will try to start a new life.

The Signorina and Haydn are still in correspondence, however, and she had many interesting things to tell me about the old Kapellmeister's experiences in England. The University of Oxford had presented him with an honorary doctor's degree, since when, even in private letters, he had signed himself 'Joseph Haydn, Doctor of Music at Oxford'. The London air suits him very well, he is amused by the English mania for cleanliness, admires the quiet English temperament, and has already made many new friends over there. Nancy Storace and Michael Kelly have received him enthusiastically, and even introduced him to the Prince of Wales and his circle.

But as Signorina Polzelli has a sister living in London, she has heard not only of Haydn's artistic and social achievements but also about his amorous exploits. Piquant tales are told about his adventures with love-lorn society ladies, wealthy elderly widows, and even little servant-girls. 'I am not unhappy about Joseph's new life', Luigia declared, and I felt she really meant it. 'Our affair has now lasted twelve years, old Frau Haydn will never give in, and twelve years is a long time for a hopeless relationship like that. I assume the Maestro will remain in England several months more, and when he returns to Vienna—he will hardly miss me.'

I asked after Wolfgang, and she told me what she knew with most informative candour. Through Haydn she had become quite intimate with both my brother and Constanze, and she seemed aware of their manifold anxieties, which had of course been increased by Constanze's latest confinement.

I was not surprised to learn that Constanze, having seen four of

her five children die, had grown more nervous and distraught than ever. As her servants would not stay long in the house and her husband took every opportunity of leaving her on her own, she again vented all her impatience on poor little Karl. No smiles or friendly words for him; instead, she would shout at him and beat him cruelly across the fingers. She is insanely jealous of the boy's love for his father, and prevailed upon Wolfgang, to put him into a boarding school at nearby Perchtoldsdorf.

Karl's admiration for his father seems to be little short of idolatrous, and the words 'my Daddy' come into almost every sentence he speaks. 'My Daddy is writing a new opera', he told Signorina Polzelli. 'My Daddy will take me to the theatre to see a performance; I shall sit on his knee, and everyone will stare at my Daddy.'

But now Karl is growing up amidst strangers, without love and tenderness. Often he is moody and stubborn at school, keeps walking through the gardens on his own, and refuses to learn his lessons. Once a fortnight Wolfgang goes to see him, and then Karl's humour alters in a trice. He begins talking, laughing, rushing around; it is only when the time comes to say goodbye that he relapses into his subdued shyness.

Noticing at one of these visits that Karl had something on his mind, Wolfgang asked him: 'What's the matter with young Karli today? It can't be that he has a secret from his Daddy?' The boy shook his head with great vehemence and looked pleadingly at Wolfgang: 'Daddy, I too would very much like to—well, to write music.' Wolfgang laughed: 'You'll have to wait, and perhaps if your other studies are satisfactory, we can then see about writing music.'

Karl pondered, and at length said weightily: 'But, Daddy, *you* wrote music when you were a little boy!'

Wolfgang was somewhat disconcerted, and could not at first think what to say. 'That is quite true, Karli', he replied at length. 'But you see—I did not ask my father whether I might do it. The music must be here in your heart; and if you feel it is there—why, then you may take a pen in your hand and write!'

Little Karl nodded understandingly, as if he had solved the most tormenting problem of his young life.

When I questioned Signorina Polzelli concerning the progress of work on the new opera, she was a little hesitant at first; and certainly

what she eventually told me was far from pleasant. Wolfgang had begun to write the score, but Schikaneder used every possible excuse to postpone payment of the promised hundred ducats. Wolfgang declared that he had not a single kreutzer in his pocket, was always being harried by creditors, and could not possibly compose at home: he threatened to stop work. Schikaneder managed to soothe him with a couple of ducats, whereat Wolfgang sent the ailing Constanze to Baden once more, on condition she took Karl with her.

Then our old friend, from whom I had hoped so much, conceived a diabolical plan. A little pavilion near the Theater an der Wien was put at Wolfgang's disposal as a study. Schikaneder installed him there, ordered food and wine from a nearby restaurant, and gave instructions that the Court Chamber Musician should be kept well supplied. Then, however, instead of paying the long overdue fee, he sent his own mistress to the pavilion as a diversion for Wolfgang.

Now Schikaneder's company was by no means noted for strict morals or the chastity of its female members; on the contrary, lurid stories were told of the carousals and debauches which took place nightly under the chairmanship of Schikaneder and his mistress, a bawd named Gerl, who was married, incredibly enough, to the company's bass singer, Franz Gerl, a person of gentle and noble character.

The impression this creature made on my brother can only have been painful, for he took her just as she offered herself to him. Though he felt nothing for her but shame and disgust, and could hardly wait for the moment when she would be gone, yet the next day, when she came again, he had no will-power left to keep her away. He took her again, only to find himself still more disgusted and ashamed an hour later. Was ever a poor human heart more degraded?

In these days, interrupted by wild nights with Schikaneder and his troupe, Wolfgang finished the score of the opera which sings of noble humanity, love for mankind, undying fraternity; while he himself floundered in a morass of misery and self-hatred worse than he had yet known.

But there were still lower depths to which a malignant fate could make him sink. One day the demon Hofdemel came to Wolfgang and asked him to give piano lessons to his wife, Magdalena, a plain, rather cowed creature of about twenty-five.

'I did not know your wife played the piano, Herr Hofdemel', said Wolfgang.

'She does not play the piano.'

'But she wishes to learn?'

'She has to do what she is told.'

Wolfgang was puzzled. 'Your wife is fond of music?'

'Listen, Mozart.' The usurer now spoke in a harsh, peremptory tone. 'I propose to make an experiment. Whether I have reason to doubt my wife's fidelity is none of your business. All I need you for is to discover for me whether she is faithful or not.'

'I do not understand, Herr Hofdemel . . .'

'That is not necessary either, so long as you carry out my orders.' 'Orders?'

Hofdemel nodded. 'Yes, Mozart, orders. I am informed that you are well versed in the art of turning a woman's head and making her compliant to your wishes. I am giving you the chance of putting this facility of yours to good use. From next week onward you will begin giving piano lessons to my wife. During the third or fourth lesson, you will make the first advances to her. As if by chance, you will touch her hand, her leg, lean over towards her. Should you find no resistance to speak of, you will try to kiss her, perhaps even. . . .'

Wolfgang had restrained himself so far with the greatest difficulty, but now he burst out in an extremity of rage: 'You low, despicable, dastardly scoundrel! Is it not enough for you to bleed strangers who come to you in their despair? Must you also rob the wretched woman who is chained to you of her last vestige of happiness? Get out of here as quickly as you can, and if you ever dare to come back . . .'

'Shut your mouth, Mozart. You will do as you are told. And if you don't like it, you will either pay back the four thousand guilders I lent you . . .'

Wolfgang tried to protest, but Hofdemel cut him short and continued: ' . . . four thousand guilders, I have it in writing from you! Or else you will find your way into jail. And another thing, Mozart: after each lesson you will give me a precise report of your—progress! And God help you if you dare to lie to me!'

The following week Wolfgang appeared in Hofdemel's house to give the woman her first piano lesson.

From a letter my brother wrote to me, I realised how these violent

and horrifying distractions not only shattered him to the depths of his soul, but also left their mark on a bodily frame already grievously impaired. He could not sleep, he had recourse to pills and medicines, only to double the doses once the first effects abated. Most of the time he was intensely irritable, suffering nobody around him; and he would not even trouble to answer if someone knocked at the door of the pavilion. His face became ever more pallid, the shadows round his eyes grew deeper.

But there were still days when he leapt out of bed with new energy, determined to halt the decline, of which he was only too well aware. On one such day, he went to his desk, feeling a strange compulsion, and wrote a letter to London, to Nancy Storace: 'I cannot go on thus, or I shall perish. Save me!'

Meanwhile Constanze's confinement was imminent, so Wolfgang fetched her from Baden, helped her to bed in their room, informed the midwife, and waited. It was a boiling hot July day. Constanze's labour had begun, and from the next room he could hear her continual moaning. Wolfgang paced up and down in great excitement, with sweat pouring from his brow.

At first (he wrote) he did not even hear the three firm knocks at the door; only when the rat-tat-tat was repeated did he become aware of it. He called a quiet 'Come in'—and gazed at the person who thereupon entered. He could not move, again and again his heart seemed to be missing a beat, and he could feel the perspiration breaking out all over his body, which was yet seized by an icy shivering.

In the doorway stood Death: tall and gaunt, wearing a full grey coat and high grey hat, with a haggard face, hollow deep-set eyes, and long, almost transparent fingers.

'Herr Mozart?' The voice was soft yet hoarse, and sounded as if the speaker came from far-away regions.

'At your service . . .' my brother stammered.

'I have come to you', continued the stranger, 'as messenger from a great gentleman, my distinguished master.'

'His name?' Wolfgang asked timidly.

• 'My master wishes to remain unknown.'

'What is it then he demands from me?'

'One very dear to him has died, whose name he wishes to see fittingly remembered for all time. Because of this he asks you, honoured Court Chamber Musician, to write a Requiem.'

Wolfgang started, felt his heart, and trembled. Death had come in person and commanded him to write his own Requiem. From the next room, like a distant counterpoint, came the soft whimpering of the woman who gave birth to a child.

'My master', the stranger resumed, 'would like you to begin the great work immediately and complete it with the utmost despatch but also with your most consummate skill.'

'Excellent', said Wolfgang. 'It shall be done.'

'How long do you need to finish the work?'

'Will your master grant me four weeks, Sir?'

'I shall return in four weeks. And your honorarium?'

Wolfgang hesitated, and thought for a moment. At length he suggested shyly: 'Fifty ducats. . .?'

The stranger took a purse from the pocket of his coat, and counted out fifty gold pieces on the table. 'Here!' he said. Then, with a solemn gesture, he lowered his head and silently walked out.

The groans from the next room grew louder. Wolfgang opened the door for a moment, and saw the old midwife panting over to the bed carrying two jugs of water. He felt his hot damp brow and could not take in what was happening around him. He dropped into a chair, and was soon wrapped in a peaceful, trance-like sleep.

He woke to find the midwife standing before him with a crying, kicking new-born baby. 'A boy', she said. 'Look, Herr Mozart, look at your son! A healthy, bonny, beautiful boy!'

'Life', thought Wolfgang, still bewildered and exhausted; he glanced towards the other door. 'And death. Life—death, life—death. . . .'

In the first week of August Salieri asked Wolfgang to come to see him. Signor Bonbonniere is still ensconced as Court Opera Kapellmeister, though he has lost much of his former influence and lives in constant fear of dismissal. 'I have good news for you, 'Mozart', he greeted my brother. 'As you know, our most gracious Imperial Master will be crowned King of Bohemia in Prague on September 6th. Upon the recommendation of the Bohemian Parliament, and, I may say with all due modesty, of myself, His Majesty has now decided to commission you with the writing of the Coronation Opera. I congratulate you, my dear Mozart.'

Wolfgang could not believe his ears. The Coronation Opera for

Prague!—that meant two hundred ducats—and two hundred ducats meant London, freedom, Nancy. But the dream faded abruptly.

‘You said September 6th, Herr Kapellmeister?’ he asked Salieri. ‘But that . . . that is five weeks from now. You know an opera cannot be written, orchestrated, rehearsed, and ready for performance in five weeks—it is impossible!’

Wolfgang believed that a trap had been set by Salieri, who must have known for months of the imperial commission, and who doubtless kept it in his desk so as to force my brother either to refuse it or else deliver a worthless slipshod work. ‘Five weeks!’ Wolfgang repeated out aloud. ‘It’s impossible!’

Salieri took a few chocolate sweetmeats from a small box in front of him, and put them carefully into his mouth. ‘Impossible?’ he smiled. ‘Nonsense! Nothing is impossible for the great Mozart!’ He drew a manuscript from the drawer of the desk. ‘Here, my dear Court Chamber Musician, is the book of the opera: *La Clemenza di Tito*. No less a master than the great Metastasio has written the verses. Other composers before you have set this book to music, but I know yours will surpass them all. Good luck to your new work—and do not forget: the opening night is on September 6th in Prague!’

Wolfgang rushed home with his ideas in a ferment. To refuse the commission would mean the loss of the Emperor’s patronage; and furthermore, how sorely he needed the two hundred ducats! There was only one chance: Süßmayr, his devoted pupil, must help him. The young man was overjoyed. He would never have dared to hope that the master would deem him worthy of such collaboration.

The two of them set to their task with frenzied energy. Wolfgang sketched out the numbers which he considered of most consequence, and the skeleton of the orchestration. Süßmayr filled in the details, and wrote the recitatives, a few arias and ensembles, using a style which he copied so exactly from his master’s that it could be distinguished only with great difficulty from the original. In eighteen days the work was finished.

Constanze had recovered well from her confinement and the baby was thriving, so she insisted on accompanying her husband once more to Prague. Altogether Wolfgang was exhilarated, like his old self. Prague had meant good fortune for him hitherto; and now he felt that everything might change. He whistled, seized Constanze by

the waist, and they danced round the room together in sudden merriment.

Again, just as four weeks earlier, he did not hear the three knocks on the door, and noticed them only when they were repeated. 'Come in', he called, and once more stood motionless staring at the visitor. Again his heart missed several beats, and the sweat ran down his brow. Constanze stopped laughing, and with a frightened cry ran out of the room.

Tall, gaunt and grey, the stranger stood silently in the doorway.

'I . . . I could not keep my word', Wolfsgnag stammered. 'The Requiem . . . it was not possible.'

'I know that.' The stranger did not seem surprised. 'My master wishes, however, to know how much more time you consider necessary.'

'The work has become very important to me', replied Wolfgang, 'and I feel obliged to devote more intense care to it than I had anticipated. So will four more weeks . . .'

'Good', interrupted the stranger. 'In the meantime I suppose you will need more money. Here are a further fifty ducats.'

Just as he had done before, he took the purse from his coat and counted out fifty gold pieces. Wolfgang was nonplussed. 'Who sends you, Sir? Please . . .' he asked insistently.

'As I told you, my master wishes to remain anonymous.'

'But yourself, Sir? Who are you?'

'That, revered Court Chamber Musician, is a matter of no importance whatever. In four weeks' time I shall be with you again.'

An hour later, with Constanze and Süßmayr, Wolfgang was driving out of Vienna in the direction of Prague. He sat in a corner of the coach, grave, silent, brooding.

Luigia Polzelli had been at the Mozarts' house bidding them farewell; she had watched them drive off and thus learnt of the strange visitor's second appearance. But for what happened after this I had to rely again on my brother's letters, scribbled in great haste and often with little coherence. The first letter, following his return from Prague, told of his sojourn there—and the failure of *Tito*.

The audience had expected a Mozart *opera buffa*, and they were much disappointed in the confused story of a gentle and 'clement'

Roman Emperor, who is continually forgiving everybody everything. The music too was generally criticised for signs of hasty composition, and the new Empress, a woman whose arrogance has already incurred wide unpopularity, gave the work its death sentence when she remarked on leaving the theatre: '*una porcheria tedesca*—filthy Germanic stuff!'

The coronation itself stood under an unlucky star. People felt it was little more than a cheap edition of the Frankfurt ceremony, and both the Bohemian aristocracy and the honest citizens of Prague saw all too clearly that the Emperor's heart was not in it. There were also many who, with good justification, considered these pompous celebrations and feasts most inauspicious at the very time that the Emperor's sister, Marie Antoinette, was in the hands of the Revolutionary leaders, trembling for her life and the lives of her husband and children.

Once again the blows of fate rained down on Wolfgang: he was made the scapegoat, and Bondini blamed him for the opera's failure. It needed all the Duscheks' sympathy and kindness to tear him out of his depression. Josepha and Franz showed themselves pathetically eager to make the Mozarts' stay as pleasant as possible. They also took Constanze aside and talked to her seriously, imploring her to give Wolfgang all her love and care at this most crucial time; never in their many years of acquaintance, they said, had they known him paler, sadder, more thoroughly sick in mind and body.

When he drove away from Prague, my brother cried heart-rendingly. Again and again he turned towards the towers and steeples, the bridges and the silvery riband of the Vltava. They reached a hill outside the city, overlooking the sea of houses and churches and palaces, and he asked the coachman to stop. He climbed out of the coach, gazed down and stretched out his arms, as if to clasp the city in a farewell embrace.

'I shall never see you again', he cried, 'my adored, beautiful Prague!' The tears rolled down his cheeks.

Immediately after their return, Constanze again went to Baden. I do not know whether she had been weakened by the strenuous journey, or merely wished to be rid of the disorder of their life in Vienna. At any rate, she retired to the little spa, where she had her medicinal baths, wandered in the autumnal forests and enjoyed herself at night in gay company at the casino. Wolfgang remained in

Vienna, alone in his unequal strife against the dire alliance of human cruelty and a physical weakness which was slowly wearing him down.

His letter ended with a terrible, imploring *cri-de-coeur*, almost the same words as he had written to Nancy: 'Nannerl, my beloved little sister of my heart—I am alone and I cannot go on like this. Come! Come, and help me; otherwise I am lost!'

•A minute later I stood before Berchtold in his office. He listened to me in silence, and his features betrayed no smattering of sympathy, neither compassionate awareness of my sorrow nor the slightest fellow-feeling with my brother in his misery. The incident after Da Ponte's departure, when my husband had given me the hundred guilders, was wholly isolated and barren of repetition. I entreated him, I appealed to his heart, his humanity, his common kindness; I might have been speaking to a rock. He would never permit me to go to Vienna.

I returned to my room, sat down at the empty cradle which had once held my little Marie, and wept bitterly.

About that time Wolfgang was in the middle of the most strenuous rehearsals for *The Magic Flute*. Until the early hours of the morning he sat at his writing desk, busy with changes and additions; during the day he was at the orchestra pit of the Theater an der Wien where he felt harassed from every quarter. Now it was a passage in the woodwind which failed to produce the required sound and had to be reorchestrated; then Constanz's sister, Josepha Hofer, who was singing the Queen of the Night, thought a certain coloratura passage too difficult and asked Wolfgang to change it. Josepha's husband, Hofer, the violinist, came up with suggestions for making the first fiddle part more effective in such and such a place; and Süßmayr complained about the copyists, who were lazy and unpunctual. As for Schikaneder, who was taking the part of Papageno as well as directing the opera, he would conceive new ideas every few minutes, stop the rehearsal, and insist that everything which had been firmly agreed to the previous day must now be radically altered.

On one occasion, they had reached the beginning of the second act and the curtain rose on the circle of priests listening to Sarastro's solemn speech. Schikaneder professed himself dissatisfied: this was not a striking enough opening, and besides, the priests' long white

robes, which had been quite costly, ought to be seen to better advantage; how would it be if the men marched on in stately procession and Sarastro spoke only when they had all taken up their positions? The director hastened from the auditorium to the stage, and passing Wolfgang in the orchestra pit, realised he would need new music for the priests' entry.

'Hey, brother o' mine', he called, 'please write a little march for the priests as quickly as you can. Something slow and solemn, tum, tum, tum . . . you know what I mean . . . '—and he leapt on to the stage to arrange the new scene.

Wolfgang looked at him in perplexity: 'A little march', he repeated to himself, 'tum, tum, tum. . . Very well', he said, turning to Süssmayr, 'give me all the orchestra parts, and I'll scribble the little march into each of them'—which he at once proceeded to do without even a preliminary sketch.

Up on the stage Franz Gerl, who was singing Sarastro, watched him in admiration. Gerl never referred to his life's tragedy which had chained him to a vicious slut; modest, gentle and considerate, he walked like a saint through the dirt which surrounded him. He spoke seldom to Wolfgang: they greeted each other politely, but otherwise went their own ways, brothers from a remote, untarnished world.

One other person seemed an incongruous figure amidst Schikaneder's *canaille*. This was Herr Gicsecke, the remarkable but diffident young man who had written most of the book for *The Magic Flute*, and who was delighted to have been assigned the part of First Slave. A few days before the opening night, he approached Schikaneder shyly: 'Will you permit me in all respect, Herr Direktor, to—er—enquire about my honorarium?'

Schikaneder expressed surprise: 'Honorarium, my dear Gicsecke? As far as I know, you are drawing your salary punctually, your salary of—how much would it be?'

'Thirty guilders a month, Herr Direktor, and as to the punctuality, for the last three months . . . '

'Yes, yes', Schikaneder interrupted impatiently, 'all that will be settled in due course, you know. But what else were you trying to tell me?'

'My honorarium for the book of *The Magic Flute*, Herr Direktor. As I am sure you will recall, I delivered it well within the time you allotted me, and then you . . . er . . . you added the characters

of Papageno and Papagena and a few ancient jests, but, er . . .’
‘Fiddlesticks, Giesecke! You know quite well that you merely performed the preliminary spadework. I, of course, contrived all the higher effects, besides giving the whole work its spiritual guidance and supervision.’

‘Nevertheless’, protested Giesecke, ‘the honorarium, which I had hoped you would . . .’

‘Honorarium!’ cried the shocked director. ‘Are you a tinker or tailor, Giesecke, or a true artist of whom the world will still be speaking a hundred years hence?’

Giesecke looked at him through his spectacles. ‘Well, Herr Direktor’, he stammered, ‘if it comes to the question of my—er—posthumous fame, then there is another matter on which I wish to consult you. I have seen the first posters of *The Magic Flute*, and I am afraid I . . . I cannot find my own name mentioned anywhere as author, Herr Direktor.’

Schikaneder assumed a fine fury. ‘Don’t be damned impertinent, Giesecke!’ he admonished. ‘First you come here with your absurd financial demands, and now you would like your name splashed across the posters, where you already appear, of course, in the role of the Slave. I know I have a reputation for unlimited patience, but I warn you, even that may have an end. Look at Mozart! Does he complain because the poster says “Opera by Emanuel Schikaneder” while his own name appears somewhere beneath “priests, slaves, etc.”?’

Giesecke gave it up. With bows and profuse apologies he meekly withdrew from the great man’s presence; and certainly the example chosen to chasten his pride was apt enough. For the erstwhile ‘author’ of *Hamlet* now mentioned only at the bottom of the posters for *The Magic Flute* that: ‘the music was composed by Herr Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Kapellmeister and Imperial Court Chamber Musician in Ordinary. In deference to a gracious and honourable public, and out of friendship for the author of the piece, Herr Mozart will today conduct the orchestra in person.’

Wolfgang laughed when he saw the poster. ‘You’re a fine scoundrel, brother o’ mine, and always will be’, he told Schikaneder. ‘But I will own that you’re quite an engaging one!’

In these days Wolfgang made another desperate attempt to

redeem himself through a woman's sympathy and true understanding: a woman far above the sordid rabble around him. He went once again to the quiet house on the Graben, where his former pupil, the beautiful, gentle Therese von Trattner lived. He knelt down before her, protested the adoration he had always felt for her, and begged her not to abandon him now.

She listened in silence, and shook her head sadly when he had finished: it was beyond her power to help him. She told him of the humdrum yet happy life which she led at her husband's side, and admitted her gradual, regretful conclusion that Wolfgang had been spoiled by women too early in life, so that infidelity was now his deepest nature. She had heard not only of Madame d'Épinay and Nancy Storace, but also of Henriette Baranius, yes, and even that Gerl woman. He would understand if she did not wish to be included in such a group.

Wolfgang understood, and took his leave of her.

There was now only one woman to whom he could turn: plain, artless, still half a child, with a touching, humble candour, and like himself deeply unhappy—Magdalena Hofdemel. With the reckless, despairing passion of one who felt utterly lost, he flung himself before her. Gratefully, filled with the bliss of shaking off her heavy chains for only a few minutes, she let him do as he wished. After every kiss, each embrace, she gazed at him as if exalted by sudden glory; and the terrible vampire lurking outside the door was briefly forgotten.

Then, on 30th September, came the great victory. In his red swallow-tail coat, black silk breeches, white stockings and silver-buckled shoes, Wolfgang appeared in the orchestra pit of the Theater an der Wien. Good old Deiner with his claque was determined that Wolfgang should not be disappointed, and polite but friendly applause greeted the pale little man with the lined sunken face and tired eyes. In the first act the audience showed no particular enthusiasm, and, despite all the claque's endeavours, the applause could only be graded as 'kind'. During the second act the atmosphere improved greatly, and even without Deiner's help the evening ended in tumultuous acclamation.

The audience demanded the composer, and at first Wolfgang was reluctant to go up on the stage. Partly, he was disappointed by the

opera's reception, suspecting that the applause had been less for his music than for Schikaneder's jokes and coarse improvisations; and also, he may have felt like protesting against Schikaneder's impertinence in not heading the programme with the name of Mozart. In the end, however, he yielded, and stood hand in hand with Schikaneder-Papageno, bowing his thanks again and again to the shouting, cheering, clapping crowd.

On the following day, Vienna could talk of nothing but the *succès fou* achieved by *The Magic Flute*. At half-past five in the morning the faithful Deiner came as usual to heat the stoves, and told Wolfgang how the clients of the coffee-houses were already singing: 'I am a fowler bold and free', 'A maiden fair and slender', 'Within this hallowed dwelling' and 'O wondrous beauty past compare'. Then the barber and Elise, the servant girl, arrived; they too laughed and hummed the melodies, and offered Wolfgang their congratulations. Later in the morning, when he walked down the Kärntnerstrasse, strangers approached him and shook him by the hand; while in the Silver Serpent he was received with shouts of '*Bravo, bravissimo!*'

At last, at last, it seemed as if the tide of fortune had turned in his favour, as if, after so many months in darkness, my brother were now stepping out into brilliant sunlight. He thought of Sarastro's words:

'The radiance of morning all darkness shall rend,
The wiles of imposture no blessings attend!'

It was in his heart to kneel and thank God for redemption from all his miseries.

A fortnight after the opening, the opera seemed to have conquered the hearts of the Viennese. One day, for his own joy and to give his son a treat, Wolfgang took Karl to one of the performances, just as he had promised.

He fetched the boy from Perchtoldsdorf and brought him first to his grandmother, Frau Weber. Since she was discarded by her fine Cousin Thorwart in favour of the young and beautiful Adriana Ferraresi, she has become truly an old woman. She now lives with Sophie, the youngest of her four daughters, in the Wieden district in a house called 'At the Golden Plough'. Wolfgang, who has become quite fond of her, visits her from time to time, taking her little parcels of coffee or sugar or chocolate, and with her sly

mischievous humour she usually succeeds in making him laugh.

But that day, when he arrived with Karl, he was in no mood for laughing, being exhausted and feverish after the long coach drive to the school and back: his only wish was to retire at once to bed. But of course Karl was in a pitch of excitement because 'My Daddy's taking me to *The Magic Flute*, I'm going to see the Fowler and Monostatos the Moor . . .'; and old Frau Weber could hardly wait to be seated in her box admiring her eldest daughter as Queen of the Night. 'No', Wolfgang told himself, 'I can't disappoint them. I must simply pull myself together and go to the theatre.'

It was the same performance to which Wolfgang had invited the Court Kapellmeister, Salieri, and his lady—Cavalieri. The two sat in a box next to Wolfgang's, and he repeatedly heard Signor Bonbonniere expressing an enthusiastic '*Bel'issimo*', while the beautiful Catarina, in a sort of Viennese counter-melody, added her no less vehement '*Wunderbar, wunderbar!*' ('How false they are', Wolfgang wrote. 'Their applause was the merest pretence, for Bonbonniere would like nothing better than to stick a dagger in my back or poison me!')

After the performance, Wolfgang took Karl to dinner at the Hofers, and the little boy was nearly distracted with delight and astonishment to find himself sitting opposite the mighty Queen of the Night, encouraged to call her 'Auntie' instead of 'Your Majesty'.

Wolfgang returned home late at night in a state of great agitation and fatigue. On his desk he found a letter from London which had arrived by special messenger. Nancy wrote: 'Come! Leave everything behind you, everything! I am here for you—and I wait. Come immediately!'

My brother's heart leapt for joy. Here was the solution to all his problems: only first he must finish the Requiem. He pulled out of a drawer the sketches he had made; it would take him a month or six weeks to put the work down on paper, and then he could leave Vienna for ever.

He had become calmer now. On the table lay a little supper lovingly prepared by Deiner and covered with a napkin: two pieces of cold chicken, a cucumber, cheese, a few nuts, bread, and some wine. Wolfgang ate, then opened the window to let in the mild air of the October night. He sat down at his desk, set the manuscript paper before him and made an automatic gesture to take up the box with

the golden quill. Suddenly, he remembered it was in Da Ponte's hands, well-bestowed for safe-keeping—perhaps on its way to London already. 'Good, good, it will be there when I arrive, just like Nancy, like Da Ponte, Michael Kelly—and perhaps even the Queen who gave it me.'

He took one of the goose quills which lay on the desk, rested his head upon his left hand, and for a minute or two gazed into the infinite heavens. Then, as if he had at last found what he was seeking, he began to write slowly but firmly: D minor, strings, corno di bassetto, bassoon. . . .

'Requiem aeternam dona eis.'

Constanze returned from Baden the next morning. Having heard of the swelling triumph of *The Magic Flute*, she had come to savour her own share in it: her position, that is, as Mozart's wife. But when she saw Wolfgang's drawn, emaciated face, she was terrified, betraying her shock so plainly that Wolfgang noticed it at once. She suggested putting him to bed and offered to nurse him devotedly: yes, she had at last recognised the horrible danger in which her husband stood, and would now try everything in her power to avert it.

Wolfgang's latest letter lies here in front of me. It arrived this morning, and the first thing that struck me when I read it was the balance of its language and the philosophical calm of its matter. It seemed as if all my brother's erratic nervousness had vanished, to be replaced by a quiet, serene resignation. Written in a neat and steady hand, the letter spoke mainly of a drive which he and Constanze had taken into the Prater.

Each had intended to lead discreetly to the announcement of a firm resolve. Constanze wished to make it crystal clear to Wolfgang that she had changed her whole attitude, that because she saw approaching catastrophe she had put off frivolity and now had no other thought than to nurse him, restore him to health, and regain his love. Wolfgang meant to speak of England and Nancy, the hopelessness of continuing their present life, the utter necessity for him of starting a new one. They must not fall into the old traps, he would tell his wife; he must do as Da Ponte had done and draw a line under his life in Vienna.

But later, when they walked through the beautiful park, with the sun bathing it in autumn's most glowing colours, their intentions

came to nothing. Instead they smiled wistfully as they came to such and such a spot: under this tree they had kissed when they were betrothed; over there by the little lake they had met the Emperor when they were newly wed; that was the meadow in which they had once played hide-and-seek with Karl.

They became very serious, and suddenly Wolfgang had tears in his eyes. 'The Requiem, Stanzi', he said. 'Let me tell you a secret: I am writing it for myself.' Constanze tried to laugh away such morbid thoughts, but he would not be gainsaid. 'No, it is as I say! I feel it here, deep in my heart. It will not be long now.'

Then his tone changed. 'Stanzi', he asked with an uncanny insistence, 'do you believe I may have been poisoned?'

'Poisoned!' she exclaimed in frightened surprise. 'Who on earth should want to poison you, Wolfgang?'

'This man Salieri. Slowly, step by step, so that nobody, not even I myself, shall notice till it is too late.'

'Nonsense!' she cried. 'What childish, crazy thoughts—why should Salieri. . . . No, Wolferl, you must not say such terrible things.'

'I cannot rid myself of the thought, Stanzi. It recurs again and again, growing bigger and more powerful until some day it will crush me to death. I tell you, Salieri is trying to kill me.'

They went into a little inn. The landlord himself pressed two glasses of fresh grape juice for them. They drank the cool sweet beverage and sat there together for a few minutes in silence.

When they returned home, Wolfgang went to his desk, took out the sketches for the Requiem, and set to work on it once more. After half an hour, he broke off and started the letter to me: 'My eyes are fixed on the door, Nannerl. When will it open? The four weeks have now long gone by. When will the grey messenger stand again before me?'

THE light of the little candle flares erratically in every direction, casting eerie, spectral shadows into the corners of the drab, sparsely furnished room. Outside, the storm rages on more; its howling mingles well with my heart's ceaseless agitation and the ghostly sadness of the room. Five minutes ago Wolfgang's faithful Joseph Deiner closed the door softly behind him, having ascertained that there was nothing more he could do for me. He asked whether I would perhaps like him to remain near at hand, but I thanked him and begged him to spare himself this trouble; so he saw to the fires and departed.

Now I am alone with my diary. It is difficult to write on the shaky old table, but since I knew when I left St Gilgen that I should need a friend more than ever, I brought my only remaining possession, this large red book, once given to me by a king. It is a constant, silent friend which has often shared my laughter and my gaiety; but today it must share with me my harshest and bitterest sorrow. I am calmer now. The blizzard, the bareness of this room, the shadows on the wall, the scratching of the old pen—they have made me quieter. I can think clearly again, and so step by step, hour by hour, I will describe the events of the last five days.

Last Saturday, 3rd December—dear God, is it so short a while ago?—I received a letter from Vienna, in an unfamiliar hand. The letter was from Wolfgang, but since he felt too weak to write he had dictated it to Deiner, who was little used to handling a pen but had set down the words slowly and clumsily.

'Beloved little sister of my heart', Deiner had written for Wolfgang, 'an icy coldness has fallen around me, and I feel that the music will soon come to an end. For twelve days I have been in bed, and all my thoughts are directed towards the Requiem. Poor Constanze is now quite distracted, so I implore you, Nannerl, with my most solemn and heartfelt entreaties: come to me, and come quickly. I know the deep grief you yourself have suffered through Marie's death, yet I feel I must beg you to make this great sacrifice. Nannerl, please come!'

So once more I sought Berchtold's permission. This time, however, I was determined to go to Vienna with or without his consent. He looked up from the document on which he was busy, and his

silent stare seemed to ask the cause of this unwonted interruption. Without a word, I handed him Deiner's letter. He read it attentively, gave it back to me, then slowly and deliberately shook his head. I did not leave him then, but I knew that words would never make him change his mind. So I remained standing before his desk, and fixed my eyes on him in a long, pleading gaze: one desperate, silent entreaty that he should permit my going to my brother. Gravely and, as it seemed to me, with still greater deliberateness, he shook his head for the second time, and turned back to his documents.

Like one in a dream, I left his office, moved slowly up the stairs and into my own room, went to the wardrobe and took out my travelling coat, a little money which I kept hidden there, a bonnet and gloves. Then I remembered the diary, which till now has always lain in a locked drawer of my desk. I took it out of the drawer, hid it under my coat, and walked out of the house. I had no precise idea how I would reach Vienna.

I turned to the right in the direction of Salzburg, passed the parish church, and ascended the little hill. I was already outside the village when I heard the ringing of sleigh bells behind me. Herr Peter, a rich landowner in our district, drove past in his sledge drawn by two horses. He stopped, and enquired whether he could be of service to me. I nodded, and he asked me to step in. He seemed to notice my agitation, but did not question me; and he brought me to Salzburg.

I arrived in Vienna about noon on Sunday, just as people were coming out of St Stephen's Cathedral. It was snowing hard. I asked my way to Rauhensteingasse, found the house, and ran breathlessly up the stairs; a minute later I was at my brother's bedside. I had not see him for eight years—not since he and Constanze left Salzburg after little Raimund's death.

I stood before his bed, which was sprinkled with music paper, and looked down at the tiny, shrunken face, with sweat trickling from the brow in thin rivulets and little red spots showing on the cheeks; I saw also the ugly boils which covered the hands. Nothing in this poor skeleton of a man bore any resemblance to my brother, and it was only when he began to smile, and his lips moved to whisper a hoarse 'Nannerl!'—that I felt I was really in Wolfgang's presence.

I tried to speak, but then saw from a movement of his head that he

wished to say something to me. For the first time I noticed that we were not alone in the room. An elderly man in the livery of a boots stood modestly in the corner; it was easy enough to recognise the good Joseph Deiner. He bowed deeply, and in my smile I tried to express my gratitude for all he had done to serve and help my brother. Then I looked back at Wolfgang, lying there with his half-closed eyes, and waited expectantly to hear what he would say.

At last he spoke. 'Salieri!' he muttered, and then repeated in a louder voice, with his eyes suddenly wide open: 'Salieri, Nannerl! He has succeeded; he has poisoned me! Slowly, thoroughly, remorselessly . . . look . . . here!' With an abrupt and violent movement, he threw back the sheet, to reveal his thighs, legs, feet, all swollen and festering with boils. Large and small ones, red, yellow, blue—a horrible, lacerating sight. 'Salieri!' he moaned. 'Here it is—his masterpiece'—and he began to weep.

I took a handkerchief from my coat pocket, and wiped his streaming forehead. As I did so, I noticed a little book lying among the manuscript papers, and read on the title page: '*Phaedon, or The Immortality of the Soul*, by Moses Mendelssohn.' Wolfgang had been watching me; he seemed to have gained a little strength from my ministrations, and now, with great difficulty, he sat up in bed.

'A wise book, Nannerl', he said. 'A book about the soul's eternal bliss.' I looked at him enquiringly, and he spoke in calmer, steadier tones: 'Death, avers the author, is the key to our true happiness. For me it has no terrors any more. I have known it since The Hague, since Olmütz, since Paris—and I keep thinking of all those who wait over there on the other side: our parents, Marianne, Christian Bach, Martini, Madame d'Épinay. . . . I have found it, Nannerl, I have found the key. Here . . . here it is!' The effort had exhausted him, and now he fell back on his pillow. Softly, in a cage near the window, a canary began to sing.

Wolfgang looked up fiercely, and called out in a harsh, rasping voice: 'Primus, Primus! I don't want that damned singing, I can't stand it. Take the canary out of here, kill it, let it fly away, anything—only don't make me listen to it any more.' Deiner obediently took the cage and carried it into the next room. 'That horrible creature cost me thirty-six kreutzers', Wolfgang whined petulantly. 'All that money thrown out of the window, thirty-six kreutzers—and now he even tries to spoil my dying!' Once more he broke into loud sobs.

I seized his hand, and caressed it soothingly. After a few minutes he became quieter. He sat up once more, felt his face and brow with his hand, seized some music paper, and began to write. I looked at him silently and waited. Suddenly he stopped and took a sheet of paper out of the *Phaëdon*; it was plainly the draft of a letter which he had written some time before. The hand was unsure, some lines were crossed out, others added and scribbled over. 'Read it, *carissima sorella*', he said, 'please read it'; and I complied, though with some difficulty, for many sentences were barely legible.

'My mind is disturbed', I read, 'and I am haunted continually by the apparition of that unknown messenger. Sometimes he begs me to finish the work, sometimes he demands it from me impatiently. I go on working because I feel less fatigue if I write music than if I lie still. I have no longer anything to fear from any side; I feel the hour is striking, and I am prepared to die. I have arrived at the end before I could make the most of my talents. Life was so beautiful . . . but nobody can change his fate, nobody can measure out for himself the span of his life. . . . I shall close now; here is my Requiem. It must not remain unfinished.'

I looked up, and found he was still writing furiously, as if hunted by some unseen power; the tiny dots and strokes filled one and yet another sheet of music paper. Then Wolfgang returned my look: 'By now, Nannerl, he has the letter in his hands, and he knows that everything is ended. London, Nancy, Michael Kelly, the Queen. . . .'

'He?' I asked.

Wolfgang nodded. 'My Da Ponte. The rogue . . . the good old rogue!' And in his melancholy smile I felt for the first time I was truly seeing my dear brother once more.

Then, like one who on the first spring day walks out into a glorious sun-bathed countryside, Wolfgang's face lightened with a sudden radiance: 'We have had a wonderful time, have we not? Wonderful, most wonderful! Do you remember when Christian came to Chelsea and told me what music was, on that bench under the old oak tree. . . ? But what are they doing to my Mitzi in Paris?' he demanded in abrupt agitation.

He gasped heavily, and relapsed on to the pillow. 'Her Majesty Marie Antoinette—they will torture her, kill her. Grimm! Grimm! You must help her. You can do it if you want to, but I am much too ill, I cannot protect the Queen any more. When I die—she will die

too . . . poor, poor Mitzi!’ He gazed at me with wide, staring eyes. ‘You remember, Nannerl, the day I fell down on the smooth parquet floor in Schönbrunn, and she lifted me up. . . . Our dear Papa was always trying to secure an appointment for me at court, and all I got was praise. Yes, bread—and sometimes butter for the bread, only not very often. All through my life, Nannerl, I have been unlucky with my kings and princes and bishops. . . .’

He seemed calmer now, but still looked at me sadly. ‘Was I not everything a man could be, dearest sister? Tamino the noble, and gay Papageno, Cherubino the amorous and Figaro who fights for his right to love, Giovanni, Ottavio, Belmonte . . . I have been all of them in my time, all of them! Why did people not let me grow up, Nannerl? Why were they disappointed because I stopped being a child prodigy who jumped on great ladies’ laps and played the piano with my fingers covered by a napkin. . . .?’

I still held his hand in mine. ‘Poor Stanzi!’ he went on. ‘She ran away yesterday. She could not bear all this misery here any longer, and I cannot blame her. She will come back soon—I hope in time.’ At this, he beckoned me closer: ‘Nannerl, do you wish to do me a great favour indeed?’ I smiled and nodded. ‘Take a coach very quickly’, he said. ‘Drive out to Perchtoldsdorf and bring Karl back to Vienna. I must see him once more, and if you hurry both of you can be here this evening.’

‘Gladly, Wolferl’, I replied, and laid his hand on the bedspread, preparing to leave him.

‘And thank you for everything, darling little sister of my heart—for everything. One word more: the Requiem, Nannerl—it belongs to you.’

I looked at him in surprise, and he continued: ‘Just in case it should some day earn some money for you. One never knows: even a piece by Mozart might possibly bring in some money one day!’ I murmured that he must forget these sad thoughts and look forward to seeing Karl, with whom I hoped to be back in four or five hours’ time. He seized my hand, brought it to his lips, and smiled at me. ‘Well, then, go, *carissima sorella*’, he said. ‘Go with God!’

Outside the door I stood for a moment on the landing and wiped the tears from my eyes. Then I breathed deeply, left the house, and went down the Kärntnerstrasse to find a coach. The snowstorm had somewhat abated and a fine drizzling rain had set in, but the weather

was so uncertain that none of the coachmen was willing to take me to Perchtoldsdorf. At length one of them suggested I should try to secure a seat in the regular post-chaise, which would very shortly be leaving from the Kärtnerthor in a southerly direction. I followed his advice.

Two hours later, I reached the little village where they produce the famous wine. It was already dark, the storm was much worse and I could not think of returning to Vienna at once; so I stayed the night with Karl in the schoolhouse. I told the little boy that his Daddy was ill and wished to see him, and that tomorrow we should drive to Vienna together. 'And will I go and see *The Magic Flute* again, Daddy's sister?' (For so I had introduced myself, and he insisted on retaining this appellation.)

'Perhaps, darling', I replied, 'if your Daddy is well again.'

'Then you and I must make him well—mustn't we!'

I promised him that we would.

The next morning, however, the streets were so icy that one could hardly walk without slipping. Apart from that, a fierce north wind nearly blew me into the roadway when I set out to try to make arrangements for my return journey. I went to the village, talked to the coachmen, and begged each of them in turn to drive me to Vienna, but all my pleading and promising failed to move these callous and indolent folk.

So I went back to the schoolhouse, and paced helplessly up and down in Karl's little room, praying that Wolfgang's state might improve and that I might reach Vienna soon. Karl and I spent the day together, and soon became firm friends. We played lotto and 'hammer and anvil', I told him of Salzburg and Lake Wolfgang, of his little cousins, Leopold and Jeanette—and for the first time in two days I thought of my home and children. I even forgot my brother and all his distress, but when evening came and the weather showed no change, I thought of him more and more and kept murmuring my prayers for him until my eyes closed.

It snowed unceasingly all through the night, and on Tuesday morning the snow was so high that we could hardly open the door. Then at about eleven the sun came out, and by four o'clock in the afternoon conditions were so much better that I went to the village once more and repeated my round of the coachmen, making wild promises if they would agree to undertake the journey. But again

they refused, and the only concession I gained was that, if the weather continued to improve, one of them would drive me to Vienna the following morning.

It was about six o'clock when I returned to the schoolhouse, to see Joseph Deiner standing in the doorway. Before he had spoken a word I knew what had happened. 'My brother, Herr Deiner. . . ?' I asked, trembling.

'Yesterday morning, gracious lady, shortly after midnight.'

I bade farewell to little Karl, telling him that his Daddy had gone on a journey and that I could not after all take him to Vienna. 'And are you going, Daddy's sister?' he said sadly. 'You are leaving me alone?'

'I'll come again, darling,' I promised him, 'and I will take you to beautiful Lake Wolfgang and your cousins, Leopold and Jeanette. . . '

'And to my Daddy?'

Hiding my tears with difficulty, I nodded, bent down and kissed him, then stepped quickly into the coach which had brought Deiner to the village and was now to convey us back to Vienna. On the way I heard from Wolfgang's faithful friend all that had happened during the previous forty-eight hours.

On Sunday afternoon, an hour after I saw my brother alive for the last time, Constanze returned to the house, full of remorse at having left her husband in so critical a state. A few minutes later, four of Wolfgang's friends arrived to sing parts of the Requiem with him. My brother had expressed a wish for this, so Süßmayr had hurriedly assembled Franz Gerl, Hofer (Constanze's brother-in-law) and Herr Schack, who is *The Magic Flute's* highly successful Tamino. They all sang the *Lacrimosa* together, with Wolfgang conducting; but after only a few minutes he began to weep and they were obliged to stop—he told them he felt he was singing a lament for his own death. Soon, however, he looked again at the manuscript, explained a certain passage in the score to Süßmayr, and thanked the young man for all his devoted help. 'My good Süßmayr can copy me so well', he declared with a grim smile. 'He copies everything I do—you must watch him closely, dear friends, lest one day he should even copy my consumption!'

Then for a minute or two he gazed silently into the eyes of Franz Gerl. 'I crave your forgiveness, Herr Gerl', he said; and the bass

singer replied very gently: 'Forgiveness, dear Herr Mozart—surely I have nothing to forgive you!'

Now my brother looked round his friends, and noticed Deiner standing modestly in the corner of the room. 'And how are you, my dear Primus?' he said.

'I should ask *you* that, revered Court Chamber Musician', rejoined Deiner. 'And perhaps I should also ask whether you would like something to eat.'

'I don't want anything, Primus', was the answer. 'My stomach is no good any more. It has had too much sad stuff to digest lately.'

Soon afterwards the friends departed to prepare for the night's performance at the Theater an der Wien. Only Süßmayr remained, and in the early evening, he, Deiner and Constanze were joined by Sophie, the youngest of the four Weber girls, who had fallen into the habit of calling at this hour to enquire if she could be of any help.

'Thank God you are here', Constanze greeted her. 'He is very low tonight.' The two women went over to the bed. 'Sophie has arrived, Wolferl', Constanze told him.

Wolfgang was so exhausted that he could not open his eyes. 'Dear Sophie!' he breathed—and his voice sounded as if it came already from another world. 'She must stay to see me die.' Before Sophie had been there long, however, Constanze suggested she should go to St Peter's Parish and ask a priest to come. Sophie departed, and the minutes passed, but no priest arrived.

All through the evening Wolfgang kept talking to Süßmayr about the Requiem, explaining to his pupil over and over again how he conceived the conclusion of the work. At about ten the doctor appeared—straight from a performance of *The Magic Flute*; and Wolfgang asked him excitedly how it had passed: whether the theatre was full, how much applause there had been, which of the numbers had to be repeated. 'I would love to see my *Magic Flute* once more', he said to the doctor, and then murmured so softly that it was barely audible to Deiner, hovering near the bed: 'I am a fowler bold and free, a man of mirth and minstrelsy. . . .'

The doctor sought to calm him: 'But of course you will see your *Magic Flute* again, my dear Mozart. Why should you not?' Wolfgang looked at him quizzically; fortunately he did not hear the doctor's words to Süßmayr a few minutes later: 'Not the slightest hope any more. Nothing anybody can do. . . .'

My brother was now seized by a convulsive shivering, and at about eleven o'clock he lost consciousness, falling into a strange delirium. He tried to beat time with his swollen, bluish hands, and his lips moved softly, though nobody could understand their utterance. But Süßmayr, who had seen *The Magic Flute* twenty or more times, fancied he could distinguish the words of Sarastro: 'The radiance of morning all darkness shall rend.'

Suddenly, just after midnight, Wolfgang sat up, his dim, glazed eyes staring into vacancy. Then he sank back on the pillow, turned his head towards the wall, and fell asleep. At five minutes to one his heart stopped beating.

Outside the windows a blizzard was raging, just as it had raged nearly thirty-six years ago when my poor tormented brother was born.

The coach was by now nearing Vienna, and honest Joseph Deiner was so much overcome by recollections of the scene that for some minutes he could scarcely restrain his own tears; mine were falling freely. At length he recovered himself and asked me gently whether he should proceed with his account; I stifled my sobs and bade him continue.

Just before dawn, he told me, a plump, rosy-cheeked little man, with a friendly, rather comical manner, called at the house in Rauhensteingasse. 'My name is Müller', the mysterious visitor announced when Constanze opened the door to him, 'and I am His Majesty's Court Statuary, owner of the Historical Waxworks.'

Constanze admitted him in bewilderment. 'And what is it you wish here?'

He smiled politely: 'The death mask, Madame.' Before she could stop him, he had bustled into the room, over to the bed, taken out his tools and set to work. 'But . . . but . . . how did you know?' Constanze stammered. He looked at her, and the cheerful joviality faded abruptly from his face and tone. 'I know everything, Madame. Everything.' Then he took a plaster cast of Wolfgang's features, presented it to her, and left.

By this time poor Constanze was near to breaking down completely. She asked Süßmayr to fetch Baron van Swieten, hoping that this rich and powerful man, who had given her husband some small patronage, would at least relieve her from the most pressing external

worries by arranging for a dignified funeral and allowing her a little additional money.

These hopes were by no means fulfilled. The Baron came, and having expressed his condolences in the customary and 'traditional phrases, he advised Constanze not to spend too much money on the funeral. 'You can have one for not much more than eight guilders', he said, 'though of course you will also have to pay three guilders for the carriage.'

'But, good Heavens, Baron', Constanze sobbed in horror, 'you are talking of a pauper's funeral!'

'Well, well, Frau Mozart', Swieten murmured soothingly, 'your poor husband does not know anything about it, and what do we, his friends, care for such superficialities? As far as you are concerned, my dear, if you save on this, I am sure you can find a better use for the money.'

Trying to prevent the disgrace of a pauper's funeral for her husband, Constanze rushed off to Schikaneder; but he had not spent the night at home and nobody knew where he was. She hunted for him all round Vienna in a frenzy of grief and distraction, until she came to the house of Herr von Bauernfeld, Schikaneder's partner in the management of the Theater an der Wien. Having observed the distressing state Constanze was in, Bauernfeld thought it best to put her to bed in his guest-room, and sent a note round to Süßmayr explaining what had occurred. According to Deiner she had not returned when he left Vienna for Perchtoldsdorf.

'And the funeral, Herr Deiner?' I asked. 'What happened in the end?'

He looked at me sorrowfully: 'It took place this afternoon, Baroness. At three o'clock.'

When the coffin was carried out of the house, he and Süßmayr had been the only people to follow it to St Stephen's Cathedral for the funeral service. They found a small group waiting outside the Cathedral: Schikaneder, Puchberg, Lange, Hofer, Stadler, van Swieten, Salieri and Hofdemel.

Just as the coffin was being lifted into the carriage, a tremendous downpour began, intermingling snow and sleet. The storm then became so fierce that the ten men, having accompanied the coffin as far as the Stubentor, decided, at van Swieten's suggestion, to go home and allow the carriage to drive on alone to St Marx' Cemetery.

Silently they shook hands with one another, and went on their ways; this was the moment when Deiner suddenly remembered about Karl and myself.

He raced back to Kärntnerstrasse, and as the sky had cleared slightly, he succeeded in finding a dauntless coachman who would brave the elements and not only take him to Perchtoldsdorf, but bring me back with him the same night. Some two hours later he stood at the entrance to the schoolhouse, waiting to break the news to me.

We arrived in Vienna about nine o'clock, and after all the agitation and tension of the past forty-eight hours I was glad to find a modest room at the Silver Serpent. Dog-tired, I fell into my bed and, five minutes later, into a long dreamless sleep.

That was yesterday. Today, at about noon, Deiner and I stumbled and ploughed our way through the snow-covered streets to call on Herr Puchberg, who hired a coach and drove us out to St Marx' Cemetery. We wished to see Wolfgang's grave.

To our horror, we learnt that the coffin, being unaccompanied, had been placed in the death chamber immediately after its arrival, and a few minutes later was buried in one of the mass graves by the cemetery's western wall. The two grave-diggers to whom we talked could remember nothing, despite Puchberg's persistent questioning: all they could say was that it had been atrocious weather, the snow had continued all the afternoon, and there were many coffins to bury. 'Whose coffin was it?' one of the two enquired of Deiner.

'Mozart the musician', he replied simply.

'And all this fuss because of a mere musician', grunted the other grave-digger, and shook his head incredulously.

We went to the western wall, but the snow lay very high and had wiped out any sign. In these conditions, amongst all these graves, it would have been hopeless to seek the one grave in which he was buried, very likely together with vagrants, beggars, whores and convicts—my brother, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Knight of the Golden Spur.

So the three of us drove back to town in deep sadness, frustrated even in this last pious purpose. I tried to thank Wolfgang's two most loyal friends for all their kindness and love; but neither would hear of it. 'I had my reward, gracious lady', said Deiner, and

then he confessed to me something he had concealed yesterday.

He had left the house before midnight and returned to the Silver Serpent to get some sleep. He was woken at five o'clock the next morning by a violent ringing of the doorbell, and when he went to open the door, Elise, the Mozarts' servant girl, stood outside in the snow. 'Herr Deiner!' she cried. 'You should come round at once—to dress our master.'

'Dress him?' Deiner was still half asleep. 'What for? To go for a walk perhaps?'

The girl shook her head. 'To be buried, Herr Deiner', she answered.

So he went to Rauhensteingasse. In great sorrow he washed the poor emaciated little body and dressed Wolfgang in his burial shirt. 'I had my reward, Baroness', Deiner repeated.

Puchberg, too, refused my thanks. 'I have never reckoned how much I lent to Herr Mozart', he said. 'It might have been eight hundred guilders or perhaps a thousand—I do not know. I am only sorry that I was not rich enough to give him more. It was a cheap enough way, Baroness, to purchase immortality.'

Deiner has gone, and I sit alone in this bare room, trying to bring a little order into the confused sadness of the last days. I do not know what is to happen now. I have destroyed the bridges back to St Gilgen, and before me lies a great emptiness. Wolfgang rests in a piece of ground which will remain unknown for all eternity. His world has ceased—it is the end.

The end. . . ? No—no!

It cannot be the end. A strange awareness is dawning on me, and I feel, just as I felt when I was ten years old and desperately ill in The Hague, what my purpose and destiny should be.

Wolfgang's world has not ceased to exist; it has not come to an end. It is newly beginning, now at this very hour. And it is I, his sister, whom God has destined to carry the message of his life and his music amongst all the peoples: the great message of eternal serenity, joy and love.

BOOK FOUR

20th December 1791—31st October 1829

Vienna, 20th December 1791

FOR a few days after Wolfgang's death my brain was clouded by fitful, disconnected ideas and emotions. Then the mists slowly dispersed, and I clung once more to the sudden apprehension I had found of my goal and destiny. Only where and how was I to begin?

One evening Joseph¹ Deiner came to the shaky little table which stood in the middle of my room, and set down on it an old Bible. I read from the Book of Genesis: ' . . . And the earth was waste and void; and darkness was upon the face of the waters; and the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. . . . '

There was the answer to my question. The world of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart is still dark, but the harmonies are beginning to form anew, waiting for the hand of the Almighty which shall divide light and darkness, and make these harmonies sound forth in transfigured glory.

I asked myself who the man was that had died in Vienna during the first hour of 5th December. For me he was the laughing gay companion of an unforgotten beautiful youth, while for Colstanze he was the fickle, maddening husband who could never earn enough money. For Joseph Haydn he was the great unrivalled Mozart, and for Nancy the fulfilment of all her love dreams. For Colloredo he was the overweening servant, for Da Ponte the wonderful partner, for Hofdemel a despicable beggar, for Deiner the idol to be humbly worshipped and served. For Scherl he was an admired and feared rival, for Bäsle the one great moment in her life, for Stadler a crony,

for little Karl 'my Daddy', and for Aloysia the embodiment of her melancholy and indecision.

Yet what was he to the larger world? People still flock to *The Magic Flute* in their thousands, but hardly anyone knows that its music is Mozart's. *Giovanni* and *Figaro* are half forgotten, and even if a few sometimes whistle a few bars from the *Seraglio*, they could not say who wrote it. No, the world of today knows nothing about Mozart; it is for me to unseal their eyes and ears, to open the pauper's grave in which his life's work still lies.

One day I made a strange observation. For years the world had taken little notice of my brother's work, let alone of his life; now people were suddenly beginning to talk about his death.

It was dinner-time, and, having taken my seat in the corner of the dining-room of the Silver Serpent, I found myself an involuntary listener to a conversation which was being carried on in strident tones at the next table. 'It's a disgrace', a stout man was protesting, as he brought a juicy knuckle of veal to his mouth. 'It's a real disgrace, I say, that they let this musician fellow starve to death, this Moralt or Mollart, or whatever his name was. It's a reproach to all the mighty folk who could have helped him, from the Emperor downwards.'

'They didn't let him starve to death', interjected his sharp-nosed busybody of a neighbour, who was just dealing with a leg of roasted goose. 'Why, every child in Vienna knows he was murdered—by that Italian bastard Salieri.'

'And why should *he* want to murder the poor wretch?' asked the other.

'Oh, the Italian hated him, you know. He was afraid your musician fellow was too good for him.'

Now the third diner at their table, an elderly, rather decrepit-looking individual, joined in the discussion: 'Gentlemen, I am only an ordinary little tailor from the suburbs, but if I were to start murdering everyone who made better suits than I do, I should very soon be the only tailor left in Vienna!'

All three laughed, and drank their wine.

'Must have been miserably poor—this Mollart', the fat man persisted. 'I hear his whole property consisted of sixty guilders in cash and about a hundred and thirty in salary arrears. His furniture, books and music, all the rubbish he possessed, was estimated at twenty-three guilders, forty-one kreutzers—and there was a piano in it too.'

Our dear old piano, I thought—the one with black keys where other pianos have white and white ones where the others have black . . .

The sharp-nosed person beckoned mysteriously to the others, and they bent their heads towards him. 'You know, gentlemen', he said in a loud whisper, 'during the day a barber hears a good many things in his shop. Have you heard what people are saying about this musician from the Rauhensteingasse?'

'Well, what *are* they saying?' Having finished his knuckle of veal, the fat man wiped his mouth with his hand.

'That he was fetched.'

'Fetched?'

'Fetched to his death by the Devil incarnate.'

'Good God!' exclaimed the little tailor, hastily crossing himself three times; but the barber's other listener was sceptical: 'And you really believe that, you glib blockhead?'

'Indeed I do. Otherwise, why should they have denied him a Christian funeral and thrown him into a mass grave with ten or twenty others? Now tell me that, you wiseacre.'

Having no answer, the fat man picked up his goblet and drained it; the others followed suit.

Ah yes, I thought, the grey messenger! A few days after the funeral, Herr Puchberg had acquainted me with the true story behind Wolfgang's feverish fantasy—broaching the subject at first with some hesitancy. 'Is it true, Baroness', he asked, 'that Herr Mozart gave you the Requiem on his deathbed?'

I nodded, and looked at him enquiringly.

'Because', he continued with slow gravity, 'I am not quite sure that he had the right to do so—I mean, to promise you the receipts from this work.'

Had I not been thoroughly convinced of Puchberg's honesty, I should have considered such a remark impertinent. 'What do you know of it?' I asked him.

'Everything, gracious lady.'

With that, he began to tell me how he had soon realised that he must find other methods of helping my brother besides money. He enlisted all his acquaintances to provide wealthy pupils for Wolfgang and invitation for him to play at private concerts. Most of his endeavours were of no avail. but then came the chance encounter with a certain Franz Leutgeb, private secretary and steward to the

wealthy Count Walsegg, who owned the house, 522 Hohe Markt, where Puchberg lived.

On 1st July, as on every quarter-day, Leutgeb came to Puchberg as usual to collect the rent. He was a tall, thin, haggard man who, whenever he went out, summer or winter, always wore a voluminous grey coat and a high grey hat. He confided to Puchberg that Count Walsegg's young wife, a woman endowed with great beauty, intelligence and kindness of heart, dearly loved by her husband and children, had recently died on the Count's estate in Stuppach. The Count, a patron of the arts and himself a fine musician, wished his wife's memory to be perpetuated in musical form by a Requiem which should be performed every year, on the anniversary of her death, in the castle chapel at Stuppach. The name of Mozart was, of course, well-known to him. He had admired *Don Giovanni*, had often been deeply moved by Wolfgang's church music, and had played the viola in Mozart string quartets. But he would never have dared to approach a composer of such stature for his Requiem, had he not learnt through Leutgeb of Wolfgang's disastrous poverty. Puchberg, with his retiring nature and ingrained modesty, had begged that his name should not be mentioned in the transaction which followed.

The coincidence of several aggravating factors, such as the oppressive summer heat, the birth-pangs in the room next door, Wolfgang's general feverish derangement, and the beginning of his fatal illness, caused my brother to see in this macabre though harmless stranger the one thing he feared most: Death.

Poor, poor Wolfgang! Was not the story of the Requiem utterly characteristic of his whole life—the way in which a turn of fate favourable in itself led, by the play of his sick mind, to a worsening of his situation? And now the fat, self-satisfied citizens sit in their taverns and coffee-houses and whisper to one another that the Devil appeared in the flesh to fetch my brother away—like the Stone Guest in *Don Giovanni*. Yes, but at least they talk of Mozart, even if they do not recall his name correctly. They know about him, and I can be sure he is not entirely forgotten.

'The Monday before last I was surprised to receive a visit from Constanze. She is now twenty-eight. In the nine years of her marriage to Wolfgang she bore him six children, of whom four died. At his side she had experienced triumph and misery, and even if it was

not in her nature to understand him, now that she stood there in the doorway, I knew she was my most important ally in the battle for Wolfgang's posthumous glory.

She walked slowly towards me, her large eyes filled with tears. As she stretched out her arms and looked at me imploringly, I became aware for the first time of what Wolfgang may have seen in her, a strange haunting beauty which I found very difficult to define. She embraced me and wept. When she became quieter, she at once told me about the private audience she had had at the Imperial Palace, where she had made her petition for a widow's pension.

'Yes', Leopold II told her, 'I remember your late husband very well. Many years ago at Florence he played the piano in my house. It is extremely sad that he never found a favourable opportunity here in Vienna which would have permitted him to show the whole world his talents.'

'And because of that, Your Majesty', Constanze ventured to say, 'he was unable on his death to leave any fortune whatever.'

The Emperor nodded sympathetically; perhaps he is not quite the small-minded autocrat Da Ponte described to me. 'The world, Frau Mozart', he murmured, 'has been robbed of your husband just when brighter prospects were dawning for him.'

'Yes, Your Majesty', said Constanze, 'and meanwhile I have been left with two young children in circumstances little short of desperate. I know, alas, that I have no claim to a pension as of right, so I can only appeal to Your Majesty's well-known warmth of heart which has always been kindled by pity for those in need . . .'

I am sure she must have talked herself into great agitation, for the Emperor now broke in: 'If that is the case, then I shall try to find a way to help you. I suggest, Frau Mozart, that you give a concert of some of the works your late husband has left behind, and I promise you to give it my support.' With that he accepted her petition and graciously dismissed her.

A concert of Wolfgang's works! I was jubilant, and at once began to make plans: it ought to take place as quickly as possible, and the most distinguished names in Vienna's musical life must be asked to participate. It should include the performance of at least one of the three symphonies lying forgotten in a drawer of Wolfgang's desk. His aristocratic friends should start selling the tickets—here was something to work for with ardour and exaltation. That evening as I went

to bed, I experienced the blissful feeling of new hope; and then came the terrible news which momentarily shattered our high expectations.

Early next morning I heard a shy knock on my door. 'Who is it?' I called. 'It's me, Deiner. May I ask you to come downstairs, Baroness, as quickly as possible? Herr Süßmayr is here and Herr Puchberg too.'

I dressed very quickly, and went down to the inn's little parlour. I found Wolfgang's two friends looking very pale, both trembling with suppressed excitement. Without a word Puchberg handed me a copy of that morning's *Wiener Zeitung*, pointing to a notice which he wished me to read:

HORRIBLE ACT OF A MADMAN

Yesterday, at 1360 Grünangergasse, a ghastly tragedy occurred. The clerk Franz Hofdemel, not unknown in certain circles for his dark financial transactions, attempted to kill his wife Magdalena in a sudden access of madness, which was apparently caused by intense jealousy. Attacking her with a razor, he inflicted heavy wounds on her head, neck and breast, and while so doing continued to hurl violent abuse at the unfortunate woman. Again and again he shouted the name of Herr M., a musician of some repute who died in Vienna only last week. When she lay bleeding on the floor, the madman turned the razor on himself, cutting open his stomach. Both he and his wife were brought to the General Hospital. Their condition is very grave.

I knew that nothing worse could possibly have happened to Wolfgang's memory; from now on his name would be dragged through the filth of cheap censorious gossip. Yet the concert, I told myself, was now more important than ever. The Emperor would stand by his promise, and in that case the others would not dare to withdraw. Constanze agreed with me, and for a week we rushed round Vienna, to hire a concert hall, engage performers, and sell as many tickets as possible. The concert was to be given three days after Christmas, and by the time the *Wiener Zeitung* reported that Hofdemel had died of his wounds (whereas there seemed to be a slight improvement in his wife's state) everything was already so far arranged that we could hope for a success.

Today, Tuesday the 20th, I came home to my little room, exhausted. I opened the door, and before me—stood Berchtold.

‘I have come to bring you back.’ He spoke the words softly but with unmistakable decision. I begged him at least to let me stay for the concert.

He shook his head. ‘The children have a right’, he said, ‘to have their mother with them at Christmas-time. We shall leave Vienna tomorrow.’

Then he left. I know that tomorrow on the stroke of ten o’clock I shall be at St Stephen’s Square, I shall step into the post-chaise and shall return to St Gilgen with this man I do not love.

May God have mercy on my brother and his work!

St Gilgen, end of August 1792

SOMETIMES I feel as if I had never spent those days in Vienna last December, as if I had never been there at all, and only heard or read in a book about everything which happened there.

The concert took place as planned, and was obviously the success we had hoped for. Arrears of rent, and the bulk of the Mozarts’ debts to the tradespeople were paid; and as Herr Puchberg refused to accept the amount due to him, there was still enough left to secure the two children’s future for some while.

Wolfgang was mourned far more in Prague than in Vienna. A hundred and twenty of Prague’s finest musicians, led by the Duschs and with the support of numerous Mozart admirers, banded together to pay melancholy homage to his works. Over three thousand people gathered at St Nicholas’ Church for a memorial service, and the Prague *Musikalische Wochenblatt* wrote: ‘Now, when he is dead, the Viennese will certainly realise what they have lost in him.’

At the beginning of March the Emperor Leopold II died of a mysterious illness, and one of the first acts of his successor, Franz II, was to grant Constanze a widow’s pension of 266½ guilders, a third of the salary which had been paid to Wolfgang. It is not very much, but will protect her from complete indigence, and at least Karl is off her hands.

One of Wolfgang's friends and admirers in Prague, Dr Franz Niemetschek, wrote to Baron van Swieten that he had heard with sorrow about the situation of Mozart's widow and children, and that he and his wife would consider it an honour if they could take over the upbringing of the composer's elder son. Van Swieten advised Constanze to accept this offer, so Karl was sent to the Niemetscheks, and now goes to the *Gymnasium* at Prague.

I have had a letter from the faithful Deiner. He tells me sadly that Constanze seems more concerned to make money out of the name of Mozart than to let that name shine with its true brightness. After the first beautiful and dignified concert, others followed, less beautiful and dignified—advertised as 'Charity Concerts in aid of W. A. Mozart's unfortunate widow and minor children left in dire circumstances by the composer's premature decease'. Most of them took place in little halls of suburban inns, before audiences less interested in Mozart's music than in the noble and tragic-looking lady who stood on the platform and related a heart-rending story about her husband's death.

One day Deiner called on Constanze and reminded her that Wolfgang's grave still bore no cross or nameplate. She was dusting the apartment at the time, and she told him rather harshly: 'Don't you worry, he'll get one; and you would do better to mind your own business.' She was standing at Wolfgang's desk, on which the death-mask lay, and as she impatiently continued dusting, she knocked it over. The mask fell to the floor with a loud clatter and broke into a thousand pieces.

In a postscript Deiner mentions that Frau Hofdemel was discharged from hospital during the summer and has moved to her native town of Brünn, where she recently gave birth to a son.

On his return from London to Vienna, Joseph Haydn again spent an afternoon with us in St Gilgen. He was accompanied from Salzburg by Andreas Schachtner, whose son, born on the very day of my brother's death, was christened Wolfgang Amadeus in his memory.

Papa Haydn's eighteen months in England had been a resounding success: he had seen a whole new world, society had spoiled him, and he was generally admired by the London public. On his way home he had chanced to meet Lorenzo Da Ponte.

Da Ponte had married the daughter of an English merchant in Trieste, but he was soon obliged to leave Italy. He tried his fortunes vainly at various German courts, and in the end decided to go to Paris. First, however, he travelled to Prague to meet Casanova and obtain repayment of old debts. 'You *must* help me, Giacomo', he said. 'I'm a poor man now. Three ducats is all I possess.'

The Chevalier laughed sarcastically. 'As they say in Vienna, Lorenzo—where there is nothing—the Emperor himself has lost his rights. I have no money to give you, but I can offer you something far more valuable than money—three pieces of advice.'

Da Ponte raised his eyebrows incredulously.

'First, unless you wish to lose your head, don't go to Paris, go to London. Secondly, in London, don't gamble at the Italian cafés in Soho.'

'And your third warning?'

'That will only be needed should you ignore the second. If you gamble and lose more money than you can pay, do not sign any promissory notes; such documents, I am told, are taken all too seriously in England.' He paused. 'And now—what was it you were saying about three ducats?'

'No, you old rogue!' shouted Da Ponte. 'Even you cannot do that to me. I tell you they are my very last reserve.'

'Listen, Lorenzo: in the little town of Teplitz, not far from here, there lives such a woman as they only breed in this splendid land of Bohemia. She is about thirty blonde, buxom, full-bosomed and beautifully perfumed. She is also very well versed in the noble art of making love.'

'A whore?'

'Vile fellow, are you not ashamed? She is the honourable widow of a minor official who recently died.'

'What has all that to do with my last three ducats?'

'The lady has to live, Lorenzo. Perfumes, dresses, coiffures and the rest cost money even in Teplitz, and she has promised me . . . if I can assist her to the extent of, well, three ducats. . . .' He looked at Da Ponte imploringly. 'My old and trusty friend, will it not make you immortal to have helped launch the great Casanova on what may be his last adventure?'

Meekly the Abate gave him the three ducats, and they parted the good friends they had always been.

'And did Da Ponte go to Paris after all?' I asked Papa Haydn.

'He meant to when he left Prague', was the reply. 'But by the time he reached Speyer, the news came that Marie Antoinette had been cast into prison. The Revolution was spreading with the speed of a forest fire, a great many influential people like Baron Grimm had fled from France, and nobody could feel safe there any more. So Da Ponte changed his plans—he continued his journey in the direction of England.'

I could not help wondering what had happened to Wolfgang's golden quill. Was it still in the Abate's possession, or had he ever sold it? Were Casanova's three ducats perhaps part of the price Da Ponte had obtained for it. . . ?

We discussed the way Wolfgang's music was growing popular. Schachtner had heard that a bookseller, in Graz had erected in his garden the first Mozart statue, and I told Papa Haydn of the magnificent success which *Così* had achieved in Berlin—Henriette Baranius singing the part of Despina. (With what feelings must the little serpent remember Wolfgang today?)

'I have thought a lot lately', mused Papa Haydn, 'about the many tragedies which marred Wolfgang's life. One of them was that he grew up so quickly as a musician, but always remained a child in everything else.'

'And the others?' I asked.

'He despised Salzburg; hated Vienna; Munich and Paris disappointed him. So he never had a home where he could be happy, just as he never found any patrons worthy of him.'

'Possibly', I suggested, 'because he was not the man to submit to their orders.'

Haydn nodded. 'And perhaps those mighty ones who hoped to be flattered and courted saw all too clearly that he was only using them for the money they might give him.'

'Dr Haydn', I said, 'tell me candidly: do you think we can rise above the effects of these tragedies?'

'We?'

'We who believe in the posthumous glory of his work.'

'He looked at me for a long time before answering gravely: 'Yes. By the grace of God, Who gave him to us and has taken him away from us, yes, we can!'

BERCHTOLD found it hard to forgive my rebellious flight to Wolfgang's deathbed, and for months he behaved towards me with an icy politeness. Yet the time came when, struggling against his own nature, he seemed to be trying to win my heart by an unprecedented show of gentleness, even affection. Only by then I neither could respond nor wished to, and sensing this, he resigned himself to it. Since those days we have been strangers, and even the children often mirror in their faces the joyless atmosphere of the house.

Leopold is now thirteen and goes to St Peter's *Gymnasium* in Salzburg. When he arrives home for the holidays, his reserve towards me is like a barrier, and I feel that ever since Jeanette's birth he has shrunk away from all that I consider Mozartian: music, laughter, gaiety, frankness. To kindle some spark of these qualities, I used once to sing and play for him. I described all his uncle's triumphs, and related how we Mozart children visited Schönbrunn and Wolfgang promised 'Mitzi' he would one day marry her. (Poor Marie Antoinette—it is five and a half years now since that beautiful head rolled in the sand amidst general rejoicing from thousands of onlookers.) Leopold showed little interest in any of this; after listening politely, he would generally rise with an apology and go down to his father's office. I have long abandoned my attempts to change his attitude.

How different is my daughter! Seventy years ago, skipping merrily around in this very house, Mama at the age of eight must have been like my sweet Jeanette, whose laughter sounds in my ears as she comes running downstairs to join the children playing outside on the banks of the Lake. But then I hear my good old Teresa bustling out of her kitchen and telling her: 'Quiet, Jeanette, quiet now! You know you must not disturb your father while he is working.' This goes through my heart like a dagger, for I am sure Teresa remembers all the laughter which used to ring through the Mozart homes in Drehgasse or Hannibal Square.

Wolfgang's son, Karl, stayed with us for a week, on his way to

Leghorn, where his mother is sending him to prepare him for a career in business. A quiet boy, Karl is now no less lovable than the eight-year-old I met at Perchtoldsdorf, and his father is still a great hero to him. Once when we were walking along the banks of the Lake, he said to me: 'Aunt Nannerl, tell me more about my father.'

'With pleasure, Karl', I replied: 'What would you like to hear?'

The boy's eyes shone as he took my arm and cried: 'Everything! He was always so gay. I remember him walking round the room singing, and at dinner playing with his napkin, turning it into a moustache—just to make me laugh!'

Then I told him such a legion of stories that all the past came back to me and I could think of nothing else. After that I had to play the piano for him and Jeanette. Karl's eyes would not leave my hands, and he kept asking for more and more pieces. 'I too would love to write music', he confided to me. 'To compose a great opera or a symphony.'

I knew what was going on in Karl's mind. In Prague the Duscheks had taught him to play the piano, but a year ago Constanze had firmly resolved that he must become a business-man and her younger son a musician; perhaps she was unwittingly trying to compensate in Xaver Wolfgang for her failure to understand her husband. She began dragging the child to a new series of charity concerts, and exhibiting him as 'little Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, fatherless child of the famous composer who died in such tragic circumstances'. She was even ready to appear on platforms with the seven-year-old boy, and sing the Fowler's Song from *The Magic Flute* in harmony with him.

Deiner still writes to me from time to time, and it was through him that I heard about Constanze and von Nissen. My sister-in-law had several times let rooms in her apartment, and about a year ago she received an enquiry about a room from a handsome and aristocratic gentleman who introduced himself as Herr Georg Nikolaus von Nissen, Secretary at the Royal Danish Legation in Vienna. When they had agreed on the rent, the young diplomat told Constanze that he was a great admirer of her late husband's works, and asked if he might see the room where Mozart died. Constanze showed him into it; and he stood there for a minute or two in reverent silence, then took his leave of her. A week later he came to lodge in Rauhensteingasse, and in about a month he had started an affair with Constanze, which still continues.

Nissen is only one of the hundreds of Mozart enthusiasts who have been emerging everywhere during the last few years, but he has the definite aim of writing a complete Mozart biography. He was determined to make Constanze's acquaintance, and on discovering that she was in the habit of letting rooms, he waited till one of them fell vacant and then applied for it. He is a correct and honourable man, Deiner insists, and when he moved to Rauhensteingasse, had no intentions concerning Frau Mozart herself; the relations between them developed inevitably in the course of Nissen's studies for his book.

He appears to be collecting material for it with great thoroughness and attention to detail. He visits everybody who knew Wolfgang, and has already spent many hours with Puchberg, Süßmayr, now a well-known Kapellmeister, Baron von Swieten, Stadler—and even with myself', Primus declares modestly.

Nissen's book will not be the first of its kind. Only three years after Wolfgang's death, Friedrich Schlichtegroll published a lengthy 'study of Mozart's life and works', and a year ago a series of Mozart anecdotes began to appear in the *Allgemeine Musikzeitung*; while even in these last few weeks we have had a new Mozart book coming out in Prague, written by that most amiable Professor of Philosophy, Dr Niemetschek, who so generously took Karl into his home and heart.

Now, at last, the world has also heard Wolfgang's final work, the Requiem. At first, Constanze did not wish to hand it over to Count Walsegg; but in the end she acknowledged his just claims and consented to its being performed yearly in memory of his dead wife. Apart from these performances the Count tacitly renounced any rights concerning it. Süßmayr followed his master so faithfully in his additions and adaptation that the Requiem will stand as a true product of Mozartian inspiration; and it has already made a deep impression on all who have heard it.

Today indeed, although unfortunately I myself could do so much less than I intended, the Mozart-following swells mightily; and what Michael Haydn had to tell me the other day gives me even greater hope for the future. He and his wife recently spent a few weeks in Vienna, and they were present at the three-hundredth performance of *The Magic Flute*. Three hundred performances—a record unique in the history of the Viennese theatre, or anywhere else! But all

Wolfgang had from it was a meagre few ducats—yes, and the humiliating adventure with Frau Gerl.

Not so Emanuel Schikaneder. The opera has set him on his feet again right royally. A delighted public throngs unceasingly to his Theater an der Wien, and a host of other Austrian and German impresarios beg him for the rights to perform the opera in their own towns. He lends them copies of the score and libretto, and they pay him large sums of money, out of which he has not so far given Constanze a single kreutzer. Michael laydn was frank enough to reproach him over this, but Schikaneder retorted: 'Mozart sold me the rights, you know, I paid him well for it; and that settles the account.'

Yes, Schikaneder has become a rich man again; he drives around Vienna with four horses, gives champagne parties, keeps mistresses, and everything is as it used to be. Only—will he find another Mozart when he loses everything once more, or will the great man also end in some wretched gutter, as I once predicted for him?

Michael has strange things to report about Signor Bonbonniere. Vienna, of course, is packed with scandalmongers, and Wolfgang's feverish deathbed assertions that Salieri had poisoned him were soon transformed into a macabre rumour: after his death, it was said, Mozart's hands and feet had begun to swell, which the doctors could only explain as the posthumous effects of an unknown poison.

But the rumour might have died there had it not been for an injudicious remark (which I believe reflected genuine admiration) made by Salieri at a party a few days after Wolfgang's funeral: 'His death is a great loss, but perhaps it is a good thing for some of us that he is dead, since if he had lived longer there would scarcely have been room for any other composer.'

The words were circulated widely, and with them the story of the poisoning. Then the Emperor dismissed Salieri from his post as Court Theatre Kapellmeister, and he of course blamed the lying gossip for his dismissal, and began to make violent protests against it, trying to establish how ludicrous, how impossible such a deed would have been. But *qui s'excuse* . . . and all he achieved was to make more and more people talk about and give credence to it.

At present, he makes continual rounds of all the doctors who now claim to have attended Wolfgang, asking them to give him certificates that Mozart died of fever, consumption, starvation, or God knows

what other complaints. 'If he carries on in the same manner for long', Michael Haydn hazarded to me, 'Signor Bonbonniere will one day end in a lunatic asylum.'

Things have also gone badly with Aloysia Lange since the death of Joseph II. Her contract with the Imperial Opera House came to an end, but she remained in Vienna for a year or two, giving periodical private concerts in the provinces, where her name still carried a certain aura of splendour. Whatever money she brought home from these excursions, her husband took away from her; and one day, when the bonds of matrimony with this despicable wretch became more unbearable than ever, she determined to leave Vienna and begin a new career in Germany—at the age of thirty-five. But her days of greatness seem to be over, nor can even her present successes in Hamburg do much to prove the contrary.

Aloysia's mother died several years ago, but while I think of the Weber family, I must set down an item of news which I read lately in the *Wiener Zeitung*: 'His Majesty our most gracious Emperor, in acknowledgment of his long and faithful services, has been pleased to bestow a knighthood on the Treasurer of the Court Theatres, Herr Johann Thorwart.' The noble knight Johann von Thorwart!—I almost laughed out loud at the sheer irony of it; but no laughter could be sarcastic enough to fit such a travesty of ennoblement.

When in Vienna, Michael naturally saw a good deal of his famous brother, and he dwelt at length on the topic which we have all read about admiringly in the newspapers. Papa Haydn, in his middle sixties, has now given the world his masterpiece, *The Creation*. He had worked on it many months—'I wanted it to have a long life', he told Michael. At last, on 29th April this year, the oratorio was performed under his own direction; and it may have been Baron van Swieten's historic mission to act as midwife to Haydn's greatest work. This man, who let Wolfgang be buried in a pauper's grave, had gathered round him twelve Viennese aristocrats, each of whom guaranteed fifty ducats towards the composition and performance of *The Creation*. So perhaps through Haydn the Baron partly atoned for all he had left undone for Mozart.

Casanova has died in Dux. During the last years of his life he is reputed to have become a devotee and confessed all his sins. It is said that his last words were these: 'I have lived as a philosopher and died

as a Christian. I often wonder whether it would not have been better had I lived a Christian and died a philosopher.'

Andreas Schachtner, the Mozart's most loyal friend and admirer for half a century, has also died. How often have we privately laughed at and teased him; yet how much we rejoiced for him in the happiness he found so late in life—the happiness of loving Sally and seeing his son, Wolfgang Amadeus, grow up Salzburg's model of a well-mannered, amiable lad.

In the spring I had a long letter from Bäsle, who takes as much interest in the family as ever. When Uncle Alois died a few years ago, she left Augsburg with her young daughter, and went into domestic service at Bayreuth. She is now housekeeper to an elderly bachelor, who has more than once offered to marry her. 'But I've been a Mozart so far all my life', Bäsle writes, 'and I'm content to remain one for the rest of my days.'

Last month I attended a notable Salzburg wedding, between Resi's daughter and Ursula's son. Throughout their youth they were close friends, and now Elizabeth Mölk has become Frau Benedict Haffner. They were married by Father Dominicus, Abbot of St Peter's, while Michael Haydn let the great organ sound forth in variations on Wolfgang's Haffner Serenade. Behind the bride and groom stood Uncle and Auntie Hagenauer, Dr Barisani and the white-haired old Chancellor von Mölk, who once intruded so brutally in my life. All these grandparents were there, and I could not help thinking that they are all older than Papa and Mama would be—my own dear parents who have been dead for so many years.

Salzburg, November 1801

IN February Berchtold died. A month later I dissolved the household at St. Gilgen and we all moved to Salzburg; we have a pleasant new apartment in Kirchgasse. I should now be able to live out my days without financial cares owing to the annuity bequeathed to me by my husband in his testament—'in return for her loyalty, love and tenderness, and her skill in running my household'. These were his words, and I am still not quite sure that they were intended wholly as irony.

When I look out of my bedroom window, I can see right up to the house in Drehgasse where I spent my early youth. Sometimes at dusk I enter the cool hall of the Hagenauer house and wait for the ghosts of those who are no longer amongst us: Papa, Mama, Wolfgang, Uncle and Auntie Hagenauer . . . I like being in Salzburg, and I have come, God willing, to end my life here where it started.

Gradually, yet with increasing certainty, the message of Wolfgang's music begins to embrace the whole world. Why did he have to die at the age of thirty-six, when ten years later success would have dropped into his lap like a ripe fruit? Almost every day news reaches me of fresh triumphs for *Don Giovanni*, *Figaro* and the *Requiem*; while the three great symphonies have flown abroad from the drawer of his desk and set on his head the crown of highest fame. In Vienna *The Magic Flute* has been transferred from the Theater an der Wien to the Imperial Court Opera, and it is also being performed throughout Germany. Constanze has sold the original score of *Don Giovanni* to the publisher André in Offenbach, a very great Mozartian, who paid her the sum of a thousand ducats. 'And perhaps it is through this money more even than Herr Nissen's enthusiasm that my Aunt is beginning to understand Mozart's greatness'—These words were spoken to me by a fifteen-year-old boy, a nephew of Fridolin Weber. Karl Maria von Weber is a tall youth with a high forehead, beautiful dark locks, self-assured, and certainly possessing a brilliant mind. His parents sent him to Salzburg to study music and composition with Michael Haydn, who brought him to my apartment one day so that he could play for me parts of his first opera, *Peter Schmoll*. 'Perhaps a new Mozart', Michael said to me when he introduced the boy.

A new Mozart? (so I mused while young Weber played his composition with great bravura). And what is it then to be a Mozart? If it means producing the huge collection of musical works which the world inherited on 5th December 1791, then I am sure nobody will ever surpass or even reach my brother. But if it means the life of a poor artist in constant struggle with hostile circumstances and lack of human understanding, ending in a sordid and premature death, then truly I would wish this amiable, frank and clever boy something better than to become 'a new Mozart'.

The war which now rages throughout Europe has not left Salzburg unscathed. After the unhappy battle at Hohenlinden, the

French soldiers moved in, and there was looting, arson, even murder. On one of the very worst days, when nobody dared go out of doors and we all trembled for our lives, young Elizabeth Haffner, Resi's daughter, was delivered of a girl, who was christened Barbara.

After Salzburg had paid two million guilders to the French as war compensation, the hostile army departed and we could all venture safely into the streets again. But the black cloud of the French occupation also had its silver lining: it made our Prince-Archbishop Colloredo leave the town. He left, in fact, at the dead of night, and escaped to Vienna with all the works of art which were in the Residence—cartloads of china, crystal, silver, pictures, furniture, books; and also dozens of sacks filled with gold. A short while ago a deputation of Salzburg citizens went to him demanding that he should abdicate and return the land's property.

Colloredo threw them out of the house, shouting: 'You have always hated me in Salzburg, from the first hour that I was chosen as your Sovereign and Prince-Archbishop. Now you shall at least have good reason for your hate.'

Very soon, I think, abdication will be forced upon him. In that case Salzburg will presumably be united with the Habsburg monarchy, and the ecclesiastical sovereigns of our country will become a thing of the past—one which it will be rather difficult to explain to a future generation!

Salzburg, Autumn, 1805

FOR about forty years I have been imparting to this Diary, just as the King of England bade me, everything which happened to me and mine. It has been burdened with many sad confidences, but I never expected to write in it so sorrowful a sentence as I now must. On 1st September, at the age of sixteen, my beloved daughter Jeanette died of scarlet fever.

My son Leopold goes his own way; he is now a lieutenant in the Imperial Army, and has remained a stranger to me since the days of his childhood. But Jeanette, that Mozartian angel who inherited Papa's intelligence and proud bearing, Mama's kindliness and beauty

—oh my dear God, Whom I have had to thank all my life for so many favours mercifully bestowed on me, why did You take her away from me? Jeanette, who gave only love to everyone around her—why, why?

I am alone now, and all that I live for is my brother's work and its grandeur. In April I had a letter from Da Ponte in London. He has not been too successful there, and between the lines I could read that this is partly his own fault. He was never able to promote a performance of *Don Giovanni*, although for a short time he held an official theatrical post. He later became the owner of a bookshop, then a teacher of languages. In the course of time he did precisely what his friend Casanova had warned him against: he went to the Italian cafés in Soho, gambled, lost money, and signed promissory notes which he could not honour. For the last year or so, with twelve writs issued against him, he has been scurrying from one hiding-place to another. He managed to send his wife and children to America, and till now has been waiting for the chance to escape from England and follow them. The opportunity has come at last, so the night before his departure, as a sort of melancholy farewell to England, he sat down and wrote to Mozart's sister.

In his letter to me he does not refer, by so much as a single word, to the golden quill which a despairing Wolfgang made over to him—to his 'trusty hands'.

My dear nephew, Karl, hearing of Jeanette's death, sent me a touching letter of sympathy from Milan. He himself has come of age, and now that he is independent, has given up his career in business, and turned to music. 'It is not too late', he says, 'and if I really hurl myself into the work, I am sure that in two or three years I can achieve all that I have hitherto been unable even to attempt.'

I dare say his decision was stimulated or strengthened by the recent hullabaloo in the Viennese newspapers concerning his brother, fourteen-year-old Xaver Wolfgang, who has recently had his first composition performed, a cantata written in honour of Joseph Haydn's seventy-third birthday. The great man himself was to have spoken some introductory words, presenting his beloved friend's son to the public; but he was so much overcome by the excitement of the occasion that he could hardly utter a coherent sentence.

Michael Haydn, by the way, was last year appointed a member of

The Royal Swedish Academy; and suddenly the former boon companion of Lipp and Spitzeder has become Salzburg's most important personage. I even see our fellow-citizens doffing their hats at his approach, though Michael is far from taking their deference seriously. In fact he makes most irreverent comments on the worthy Salzburgers, which perhaps I had best not repeat even in my diary!

After a long silence I have had a letter from the Abbé Bullinger, who like Michael is now over sixty, and lives as a parish priest in his native Swabia. 'It's a devilish boring life', he writes, 'continually baptising the babies of Diepoldshofen, marrying the young couples and burying the dead. Particularly for one who was once a close friend of the Mozarts and spent with them one's best years.'

There is one other small event which I feel like recording. Last week Barbara Haffner, who is just six, appeared in my apartment, accompanied by Elizabeth and Ursula—her mother and grandmother. The little girl asked me most politely whether I would be kind enough to teach her the piano.

It is very many years since I earned money by giving piano lessons, but now, when I saw the three generations in front of me, I felt sure there was nothing better I could do, and I gladly accepted. The next morning who should arrive during Barbara's first lesson but Sally Schachtner—with her son Wolfgang Amadeus, now nearly fourteen. She said she would never have ventured to bother me had she not heard that I . . . and what was right for the Haffners would certainly be right for the Schachtners too . . . and would I be ready to give piano lessons to Wolfgang also. . . ?

So now I have two pupils, and I should not be surprised if my class soon grew to ten times that number. I like the lessons, the children tell me gravely their important little troubles and hopes and joys. Sometimes I laugh with them just as if I were one of them, and for a few hours I even forget the burden of my bereavement and loneliness. •

THE other day I read a sad description of how poor King George III spends his old age. For the last five years his brain has been clouded, and they keep him at Windsor Castle, where his main occupation is music. He sings a little, plays the harpsichord, scrapes at a fiddle.

I could not help thinking of those remote and magnificent days over half a century ago when my brother received his golden quill and I my large red book. Of the quill I have heard nothing for twenty-five years, and I very much doubt whether I shall ever hear anything of it again. When Queen Charlotte gave it to Wolfgang, she hoped that everything he wrote with it might be for his good and happiness. Alas, he had to use it for too many things that were not for either, but at least the quill was in some sort a talisman, which he should never, never have given away: he was lost the moment he parted with it. And what of the red book?

It is now ten years since I last wrote in it, and I cannot explain the strange desire which has impelled me to scan through its pages today and make a new entry. Perhaps it is the continual talk one hears about 'the Beginning of a New Era'—which my son Leopold believes will indeed be a brave new world without wars and hunger and destitution. I am grateful to God that Leopold has come through the wars unscathed; and now, having taken off his uniform, he has become a customs official at Innsbruck. If he has therefore achieved all he expects from life, who am I to blame him?

Certainly, when I read through the yellowing pages of this book, I cannot rid myself of the feeling that at Waterloo the curtain came down on my world.

My brother's work now stands before all mankind in its full majesty and splendour; it does not need my help and my prayers any more. Mozart is becoming recognised as the greatest composer the world has yet known. London and St Petersburg bow before his genius, and homage is paid to him by Paris, Milan and Berlin, three cities which he longed to conquer in his lifetime; his enthusiastic following includes young and brilliant spirits like Monsieur Stendhal in France and Herr E. T. A. Hoffman in Germany. Yes, Wolfgang's music sounds through all lands with its miraculous, ageless beauty—but what has happened to the men and women who were around him in his life?

The regiment of the dead grows apace, and among them, just as Da Ponte did many years ago, I can see clearly two definite groups. In the one group are those who were good to Wolfgang and have died in peace and serenity: Father Dominicus, noble Abbot of St Peter's; Doctor Mesmer who once commissioned *Bastien and Bastienne*; Meissner, the huge, jovial singer with so pure and tender a voice; Süßmayr, who died prematurely of consumption, just as Wolfgang had half predicted; dear old Bullinger, Puchberg, Deiner, Countess Lodron, and of course the dear brothers Haydn. First, Michael, whom we loved ever since the day he first came to our house and shocked our parents by his forthright language; and three years later, the great Joseph—the French were occupying Vienna when he died, and the whole world mourned him. The Emperor Napoleon was informed of the news, and immediately gave orders that his body should lie in state under a guard of French officers.

What of the others—those who worked evil towards Wolfgang in his life? Colloredo died a bitter, despised old man; in his house nobody, it is said, was permitted to mention Mozart's name. Grimm, on the other hand, was always boasting that when he was rich and powerful he had been the man who truly discovered Mozart—poor old Grimm! He at length rose again after leaving France, for Catherine of Russia made him her Minister to Hamburg; but when she died, his fortunes sank once more, until finally one of Madame d'Épinay's grand-daughters took pity on him and gave him refuge for the rest of his days. Emanuel Schikaneder in his last years was an obscure, bankrupt theatrical manager who lived and drank in sordid provincial inns; he too came to find his chief pride in the time when he had called Mozart 'brother o' mine'. A rogue, certainly, but one I think of still with a strange, reluctant affection.

My days are monotonous, unexact, serene. I give lessons to many of Salzburg's younger generation, and if ever my ears are jarred by the constant tinkling of the piano, then, to change my mood, I have only to think of my two favourite pupils, the sunny-natured Barbara Haffner, and the grave, considerate Wolfgang Schachtner, in some ways so like his father. He has now become a fully-fledged Doctor of Philosophy, but he still comes twice a week to play duets with me, and he renders me many little services—which he says modestly are small return for the kindness I have shown to him.

Last summer my dear nephew Karl spent a fortnight with me here. He has recognised that his talent is insufficient to make music his profession, but it remains his life's ruling passion. He has become a civil servant in Milan, and his house is known as a centre where the town's musicians and music-lovers assemble. In appearance Carlo (as he is now called in Italy) takes after the Webers, and to me he looks a most handsome and attractive young man. Lest this should be ascribed to the partiality of a fond aunt, I might bring a witness in sixteen-year-old Barbara. 'The most beautiful man I have ever seen!' she said when he walked into the room one day during a piano lesson; and her mouth remained wide open. Karl laughed, ran his hand gaily through the girl's hair, and took a small box out of his pocket. He opened it, and with great gallantry offered Barbara some bonbons.

For the last six years Constanze has been the Baroness von Nissen, and she lives happily with her husband in Copenhagen. We correspond from time to time, and from her letters, from what Karl tells me, and from occasional outside reports, I conclude that an astonishing change has come over her. Through Nissen's personal idolatry of Mozart, Constanze has been transformed from a superficial and undisciplined creature to a most dignified, intelligent woman, deeply aware of her mission in life.

The nine troubled years of her marriage to Wolfgang have grown dim in her memory, and by now she has almost forgotten the unending anxieties over money, the strain of continual confinements, Wolfgang's 'chambermaideries', and the instability and extravagance in her own character which so often marred their life together. For a long time she fought against the realisation that she had been married to one of the world's unique spirits, but Nissen's loving guidance has gradually brought her to accept this; and today she is proud to have stood at Wolfgang's side in the fierce strife with a hostile world.

She administers his inheritance with great skill and energy, and they say she has acquired a considerable fortune from the proceeds of his works. She recognises that Wolfgang on his deathbed assigned to me the receipts from the Requiem, and she punctiliously sends me all the amounts due to me. Both her sons love and respect her.

Young Wolfgang lives as a music teacher far away from all of us

in Lemberg. He is reputed to look very much like his father, but his temperament is headstrong and choleric, and he obviously suffers from inheriting so mighty a name. Karl has smoothed out his former differences with his mother, and a few years ago she sent a surprise present to him in Milan: it was the quaint little piano which half a century before had travelled all over Europe with us Mozarts.

Yes, the Baroness von Nissen brings great credit to the name of Mozart.

Salzburg, December 1821

I AM now seventy. My hands tremble a little when I write, my feet tire easily, and my eyes begin to dim. I see myself in a mirror: who is that feeble, worn old figure who looks sadly back at me? Was that once little Nannerl? The child that skipped along Drehgasse to buy some sweetmeats from Zem, the grocer? The admired girl virtuoso in her purple velvet gown who walked proudly through the gold and white doors of St James' Palace? The beautiful Nannerl Mozart who went for her lonely walks on the Monchsberg, and the young Baroness Berchtold who drove in from St Gilgen to attend festive receptions at the Archbishop's Residence? Where have all these vanished?

There, instead, goes a white-haired old lady, walking slowly and carefully through the familiar streets, supported by her wooden stick. How hard to believe that this too is the same Nannerl!

Now and then when people pass me I hear someone muttering to his companion 'Mozart's sister!' The other will shake his head incredulously, and after reckoning out dates and ages, will whisper back: 'Mozart's sister? How can *she* be still alive?'

'Yes, my dear Sir', I feel like answering, 'still alive, and still as young at heart as in the days when she went for her raspberry sweetmeats' I remember the girl of eight or nine, I smile quietly, and perhaps talk to myself a little, as old people will; then I continue on my way.

But now, as faithfully as the present Nannerl of seventy remembers, I shall note down the chief events which have occurred during these last years.

In London, King George III died at a great age; he had been feeble-minded for many years, and his poor tired brain had not even been able to grasp the news of his Queen's death which they tried to break to him three years ago. Wolfgang's 'Violet', the lovely and vivacious Nancy Storace, has also passed away; shortly before her end she destroyed all the letters Wolfgang had ever written to her.

• The thought of Britain reminds me of an unexpected visitor I had a few months ago, a quiet, courteous man in his middle fifties, who wore thick spectacles and seemed of a somewhat retiring disposition. He styled himself Charles Louis von Giesecke, Professor of Mineralogy at Dublin University, and it was indeed the same Giesecke who had once been a member of Schikaneder's company. Of course he had long ago given up the theatre, and is a considerable expert in his own branch of science. He does not much care to be reminded of the time when he used to smear his face with paint, when his name appeared on theatrical programmes as 'First Slave'; yet there is one achievement from those days of which he is unreservedly proud: that he wrote the libretto of *The Magic Flute* for Mozart. Alas, his pride is often damped by the attitude of his professorial colleagues when he refers to this even casually. He notices on their faces a look of embarrassment and polite scepticism, as if they would say: 'Old Giesecke's quite a pleasant fellow, but why does he go on repeating that cock-and-bull story about the libretto of *The Magic Flute*—when everyone knows that the man who wrote *that* was the famous Emanuel Schikaneder?'

Leopold has married at Innsbruck, and for two years now I have been a grandmother. I have not yet seen my grandchild, little Henrietta, nor made the acquaintance of my daughter-in-law. But growing old has taught me the truth of the ancient wisdom, that we should let everyone be happy after his own fashion.

Constanze and Nissen have moved to Salzburg. Since Nissen was in poor health and wished to retire from his diplomatic duties, they came to Gastein last year, hoping the invigorating baths there would be beneficial for him. They liked the Austrian landscape so well they decided to remain here, and make their home at Salzburg; they settled in the house of the old Court Pharmacy in the market square.

So after just on thirty years I have seen Constanze again. We sat together round the *Jause* table, drinking our chocolate, and, while Nissen listened in silence, we went on talking—of Wolfgang,

naturally, and of nothing else. At length I asked her whether despite all their conflicts and misunderstandings she had ever felt a lasting anger against him. 'No, Nannerl!', she replied without a moment's hesitation. 'One could never be truly angry with him for long, because . . . you see . . . well, he was so good.'

It was Constanze's idea that around 5th December, the thirtieth anniversary of Wolfgang's death, the whole family should assemble at Salzburg and pay him our united homage, in gratitude to God, by Whose grace we have been permitted to see his work come to its resurrection in brightest glory.

In the early autumn Karl travelled up from Milan, arriving in Salzburg early in October. One day, just as he had done six years ago, he walked into my room while Barbara Haffner was having her piano lesson. Only this time she did not open her mouth wide on seeing the 'beautiful man', nor did Karl run his hands through her hair and offer her bonbons. Instead she curtsied to him, and he gallantly kissed her hand. Karl is thirty-eight now, and Barbara just twenty-two; my own eyes find her fairer than ever.

It was a beautiful, warm, sunny October, with the Salzburg air and countryside as its most serene and beguiling; in such a setting what happened seems, in retrospect, almost inevitable—Karl fell in love with her. Did Barbara return his love? Certainly she was flattered by his attentions, proud to have been thus selected by Signor Carlo Mozart, for whom all the pretty, slender, dark-eyed maidens of Milan must undoubtedly be sighing. One day Karl confided to me joyfully that, although the decisive word had not yet been spoken, Barbara had encouraged him to hope that she might consent to become his wife.

Then, during last month, young Wolfgang came to Salzburg. He has never recovered, I am sure, from the humiliations he suffered as a small child, being exhibited as an object of pity in concert halls and smoky suburban inns, being made to sing the Fowler's Song in his piping little voice. It was then that he must unwittingly have come to fear and hate music, long before his father's greatness dawned upon him. He was bred and reared to become a professional musician, and much bitter suffering and disappointment it has caused him.

When he first saw Barbara, he was certain of having at last found the fulfilment of his restless dreams. With this girl at his side, all his doubts and conflicting impulses, all the tribulations to which his

musical mediocrity exposed him, would be healed and redeemed. Accordingly, with the full force of his brilliant, fiery, extravagant nature, he flung himself into Barbara's arms; and Barbara—fell madly, blissfully in love with the romantic firebrand.

Then Wolfgang learned from his mother what had taken place between Barbara and Karl, and he at once sank into a bitter, brooding melancholy. Karl, however, was only too well aware of the girl's true feelings. He went to Wolfgang, and with the unselfish sincerity of a generous heart offered to renounce his hopes of Barbara. But Wolfgang refused, with sardonic humility, to buy his life's contentment through his brother's favour. He said that he wished Karl and the girl every happiness, and as for himself—he would continue to go his own way. Karl implored him to come to his senses, not to bring deep unhappiness to Barbara; but all these entreaties were useless. On Nissen's insistence, however, and to avoid a public scandal, Wolfgang stayed to take part in the Memorial Mass on 5th December; the next day he left Salzburg.

Three days later Karl also departed.

The great thunderstorm is over, and every Monday and Thursday, just as before, Barbara comes to me, plays over a few pieces on the piano, and listens attentively to my criticisms and advice. We do not speak about the days of October and November, nor about Karl and Wolfgang. But now and then I feel, from the tender touch of her hands on the piano or from the sigh of a musical phrase, that her heart is broken. One of three hearts.

Salzburg, end of December 1826

THE meagre light which still glimmers in my old eyes is nearing extinction. 'Dear Baroness', my philosophical doctor told me the other day, 'growing blind at seventy-five may not be the worst thing that can befall us. There are often things, and people as well, that I see but wish I did not have to see.' Perhaps my old friend is right, yet these eyes, now dimmed, have given me many sights of splendour or delight which have enriched my life, and for which in my old age I humbly thank God.

Yes, these eyes saw the mighty Empress Maria Theresa surrounded

by her laughing children, and they gazed on that great wonder of the time—the bridge over the River Thames in London; they smiled at the now celebrated Privy Councillor Goethe, when as a boy he came with his mother to our concert in Frankfurt; they greeted Ludwig van Beethoven, who today is called the true successor of Mozart and Haydn, when he arrived at the deathbed of my beloved father; and they looked down at my brother in the orchestra pit of the Munich Court Opera, at the moment when he gave the down-beat for the overture to *Idomeneo* and began his career as a great composer. These eyes watched my little angel Jeanette playing with other children on the banks of Lake Wolfgang; though they also had to see her dying of scarlet fever, and they once stared sadly into the snow which covered a pauper's grave in Vienna.

Nevertheless, it is a rich and happy life that lies behind me. In my childhood Papa decided that I was to become something extraordinary, and before very long I began to believe it myself. Then came my illness at The Hague and the Last Sacrament. When I was well again, I knew that it was not I but Wolferl, my little brother, who had been endowed with genius. I received God's word, and thenceforward I saw it as my duty to stand near my brother and help him whenever he needed my help and it was in my power to give it him. Today I can assert with a clear conscience that I have fulfilled my mission from God, far beyond Wolfgang's death.

This, then, shall be my last will and testament. My heir is my son, Baron Leopold von Berchtold, official of the Imperial Customs at Innsbruck. I bid him care for my faithful servant Teresa, as I should have done myself, ensuring that the evening of her life may be spent in pleasant and comfortable circumstances. To the poor of the city of Salzburg I bequeath thirty guilders. All letters and papers connected with the life and work of my brother, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, which will be found in good order in the three drawers of my writing desk, my son shall give to my brother's widow Constanze, Baroness von Nissen; it shall be for her alone to decide how she uses these documents. The receipts from performances of my brother's Requiem, which he assigned to me on the last day of his life, are to be divided in equal parts between his sons, Karl and Wolfgang.

It is my explicit wish that this diary, which has been my faithful, silent friend and companion for sixty-two years, be deposited in the Municipal Archives of Salzburg, together with the attached red

leather box and the content thereof, until January 1856, the hundredth anniversary of my brother's birth. My dear young friend, Dr Wolfgang Amadeus Schachtner, shall then hand these two pieces, book and box, to my beloved nephew Karl, if he is still alive.

Should my nephew, however, be no longer alive, I instruct Dr Schachtner to burn the whole parcel without opening it. If Karl ever reads through these pages, he will see 'his Daddy', whom he loved so much, just as he was, and not as the angelic statue which our prudish and sentimental century is beginning to make him. Only Karl is to decide which picture of his father future generations shall see, and I wish him to know that it will in no way wound my spirit whatever he decides to do with this chronicle—even if the decision be to destroy it.

An inner voice tells me this may be the last time I shall write in this large red book, so I must record the fate of some of those who have appeared in its pages. Baron Nissen died peacefully soon after finishing his life's work, the Mozart biography. Antonio Salieri too, last ghostly relic from a remote age, has finally found his peace. He was seventy-five, and spent the last months of his life in Vienna's General Hospital, very sick in body and with a mind unhinged. He was still tortured by the idea that he must convince the world of his innocence of Wolfgang's death.

To his former pupil, Ignaz Moscheles, Salieri opened his heart in a most pitiful confession. 'As one who must soon stand before God, I tell you, my friend, that those horrible slanders had no truth in them whatever. I did not poison Mozart! Go out and proclaim it to the whole of Vienna, to all mankind, that old Salieri swore this to you on his deathbed.' Tears ran down the ravaged and emaciated face. 'But tell them too', he continued softly and in deep sorrow, 'that I did much worse to Mozart than poison him. With malicious little stabs I turned the last years of his life into a Hell on earth. I harmed where I could have helped, I was jealous and petty when I had the chance of showing true generosity. That, Moscheles, you may tell them, is Salieri's eternal guilt, for which I implore God's forgiveness every remaining moment of my life.'

Did I say Salieri was the last relic of that past age? No, there is another, still living.

Only a few weeks ago an ugly old slattern appeared in Salzburg, brought here by the police from some prison in Bavaria. She was never seen about in the daytime, but at night, so Teresa told me, she would sit in low taverns, singing bawdy songs in a croaking voice and begging for the price of a glass of liquor. In the mornings she was often found in the gutter, and then those who took pity on her would bring her to the house of the old Court Pharmacy.

One day when I went to visit Constanze and first saw Aloysia again, I imagined that old Frau Weber had suddenly returned to life. The reddish brown hair hung in strands over the face, and the fat body could be seen under a dirty grey dressing-gown. She smelt of the cheap liquor she had drunk, and tried vainly to stifle her continual belches. Could this be the miraculously beautiful Aloysia before whose charm an Elector, an Emperor and a Mozart had once capitulated? Was this the same veiled lady who had once followed me on to the Mönchsberg and spoken to me of her love for my brother?

After leaving Vienna, she went from one provincial theatre in Germany to another. The towns became smaller and smaller, as did her salaries. In May 1821, while searching for some minor engagement in Berlin, she learnt that the Royal Opera House was rehearsing a new opera, *Der Freischütz*, by her cousin Karl Maria von Weber. (How well I remember him, and how sad I was to hear of his premature death only last June.) Well, Weber took pity on Aloysia and secured her a position as promptress; but the demon alcohol already had possession of her. She was dismissed a few weeks later and continued her hopeless wanderings, until she finally arrived in Salzburg at Constanze's house.

Nor is she Constanze's only worry, for the youngest of the Weber sisters also lives there—that kind-hearted Sophie who in Wolfgang's last hours rushed round Vienna trying to find a priest to give him the Last Sacrament. She is a pathetic, feeble-minded creature, who meekly does all the work of the house. Only sometimes she suddenly stops, and asks Constanze whether she had not better run over to Rauhensteingasse and see whether her brother-in-law requires something. Her poor brain has forgotten that for the past thirty-five years Wolfgang has not needed her services any more . . .

But to turn to happier things, and to people of the present—last spring our Cathedral was the scene of a wedding celebrated with a

festive magnificence such as Salzburg has not seen for many a long year. The bride and groom were the two darling first piano-pupils of my old age: the beautiful Barbara Haffner and Dr Wolfgang Amadeus Schachtner, Professor at the Salzburg *Gymnasium*. Three old women, Ursula, Sally and I, stood next to one another weeping tears of pride and joy, and the proudest and most joyful was Sally. The widow of Court Trumpeter Schachtner, who once as an orphan girl had eaten her dinner every day with a different Salzburg family, who for twenty years was Countess Lodron's chambermaid and companion—she now saw her son marrying the fairest and most charming girl in Salzburg, and gaining a share in the heritage of all the Haffners and Hagenauers, Mölks and Barisanis.

Manuele Garcia walked into my room, and it might have been Don Giovanni in person. The most famous singer of our time, he had written from Genoa a week earlier, saying that he was coming direct from New York to Salzburg, and hoped to see me. I had no idea what the object of his visit might be, but assumed he was one of the many travellers who now come to this town and knock at my door so that they may boast to friends and relatives at home of having seen Mozart's sister. With Garcia, however, it proved to be different.

The slim, dark, elegant Spaniard, adored by the women of the whole world, made me a deep bow and reverently kissed my hand. 'I have travelled many thousands of miles, gracious lady', he said solemnly, 'to fulfil a certain commission. Today I rejoice to have reached my goal.'

I looked at him enquiringly. Instead of explaining in words, he felt in his pocket, drew something out of it, and then, bowing deeply once more, handed me the red Morocco box just as sixty years ago the Queen of England had handed it to my brother. I opened it with trembling fingers. There before me lay the golden quill— which had written so much glorious music. With shy tenderness my old hands caressed the beautiful quill, and I wept quietly.

'Da Ponte gave it to you, Señor Garcia?' I asked at length.

He nodded, smiled, then told me how it had come about, and what he knew of Lorenzo Da Ponte.

Well, the Abate had escaped twenty years ago from his London creditors, and after a dangerous voyage, lasting eighty-six days, had reached Philadelphia. With his brilliant gifts, distinguished looks and

magnetic eloquence, he easily conquered the city, and soon became the lion of Philadelphian society. Later he had the same success in New York, and was even appointed Professor of Italian Literature at Columbia College.

After that, his decline started. His wife and children left him, he became a manufacturer of cheap liquor, a merchant of drugs and a cardsharp. Just as he had done in London, he fell to wild gambling, and eventually sank in a sea of debts and poverty, so that for many years nobody heard anything of him. Then one day, learning of Garcia's arrival in America, he approached the great baritone, who showed him sincere friendship and kindness. This kindled the fire of enthusiasm once more in old Da Ponte's soul, and the result of the encounter was the first triumphant presentation of *Don Giovanni* in New York, with Garcia as the Don.

It was Mozart's first victory in the New World, and nobody was prouder at having brought it about than Da Ponte. 'It seems to be my fate', he said, 'to discover Mozart and to rediscover him. Before I worked with him, he was almost unknown, a precious stone buried in a mass of barren rock. I think of my ephemeral successes with Salieri and other composers, but what remains today of all of them?—hardly the name. Yet our *Don Giovanni* glitters with sublime radiance like the silvery stars above us in a clear night sky.'

Before Garcia left New York, Da Ponte handed him the Morocco-bound box. 'When you arrive in Europe, Manuele', he said to him, 'go first to Salzburg and stand awhile in silence before the house where Mozart was born, Mozart, that glorious light which shines forth from the eighteenth century into future millennia. Then go to Mozart's sister, and give her the golden quill. Tell her she is right, old Da Ponte is an arrant rogue who has cheated his fellow-men. But tell her that I have not lost sight of what I owe to the memory of the greatest man who ever crossed my path. I have kept the quill like a sacred relic for thirty-five years, and now at last it comes home to her.'

For a minute we were both silent, then I asked: 'And how is the dear Abate now, Señor Garcia?'

He smiled. 'Da Ponte has little to fear any more, gracious lady. He is seventy-seven, and cannot have many years to live; but it looks as if his very stormy life will end in a calm haven where he can prepare to meet his Maker.'

Soon afterwards Garcia departed, and set off on his way to Paris.

My eyes darken more and more, and my hands grow tired. In this hour, when I write in the large red book for the last time, book and quill are again united, as they were on that day when Their British Majesties King George III and Queen Charlotte handed them to my brother and myself. The great circle has closed.

Salzburg, 31st October, 1829

I AM not used to writing, yet to fulfil the wish of my gracious mistress, Baroness Maria Anna von Berchtold, born Mozart, I Maria Theresa Drechsler, born in Klein-Gmain in the Year of Grace 1749, and a servant for sixty-three years in the house of the Mozart family, must write down the sad news that my mistress died at noon the day before yesterday, October 29th, just as the bells of all the Salzburg churches began to ring.

We buried her today in St Peter's Cemetery, not far from the grave of the late Reverend Father Dominicus. For three years she has been blind, and in this last year of her life she was bed-ridden, yet contented and without burdensome cares. I am only a simple person, but I often think to myself how strange it is that our dear Herr Wolferl, who had so many troubles and worries all through his life, now looks after us so well almost forty years after his death. Frau Constanze has become a rich woman from performances of his operas, young Herr Wolfgang is a famous piano virtuoso, Herr Karl receives money from all over the world, just as my late mistress up to her very last days still received presents and honour, as Mozart's sister. And even for me, an old woman of eighty, Herr Wolferl has been providing a peaceful evening of life.

Sometimes in the last few months I, who read very badly, have had to read to my mistress out of the beautiful book which Baron Nissen wrote about our dear Wolferl. And sometimes when the Baron made too much of a plaster angel out of him, I would look at her and see her face wrinkling up, so that there seemed to be a smile even in her blind eyes.

I am an uneducated old woman and I do not know what it is that makes some people great and lets other people remain small. If Baron Nissen says that Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was among the world's great ones, then I am sure he will know why. For me our Wotterl was not a great one, not an angel and not a saint—but a mischievous darling boy whom none of us could help loving from the bottom of our hearts.

EPILOGUE

7th and 8th September 1856

CARLO Mozart closed the book, drew a weary hand over his brow and eyes, and looked briefly up at the ceiling. Then he began staring at the little red box lying before him on the table; but he was not thinking of his father, nor of his Aunt Nannerl. 'Barbara and Schachtner!' his brain repeated—and with a slow smile he shook his head.

Noticing suddenly how dry his throat had become, he saw the bottle on the table, poured out half a glass of wine, and took a thoughtful sip. 'Perchtoldsdorfer Spezial 1830', he read on the label of the bottle. 'Perchtoldsdorf', he murmured to himself, and again shook his head, but this time without smiling.

The clock of the college church nearby boomed out five long chimes. Carlo rose, went to the window, and pulled back the curtains, flooding the room with the sunshine of early morning. He opened the door on to the balcony, and stepped out into the September dawn. Salzburg lay before him, tranquil, still sleeping; on the horizon he could see the mountains, enveloped in thick mist; and down there he could hear the rustle of the silvery Salzach. For a minute or two he savoured the quiet beauty of the scene, then he turned back into the room.

Breathing heavily, he slumped in the easy chair where all night he had been reading the red book. As so often during these last months, he listened to the nervous, irregular beats of his heart, and realising the full weight of weariness which had all at once come over him, he soon sank into a profound sleep. When he awoke three hours later, all the bells of Salzburg sounded in his ears, high and low, loud and soft, near and distant. Giuseppe, the old valet, stood before his master, shaking his head reproachfully as he helped Carlo out of the

chair. 'The bath, Signore', he said. 'In an hour or so the gentlemen will be arriving and we don't want to keep them waiting.'

Carlo took the red book and the red box, wrapped them up once more in the paper wherein they had rested for over a quarter of a century, and deposited the parcel in a drawer of the bureau, which he then carefully locked.

An hour afterwards Salzburg was fully awake. The houses had put out all their flags; garlands and banners were hanging across the streets; and through the town's seven gates singers and bands and choral societies from all over Austria came streaming across the Salzach bridge towards the old city.

Then the members of the Salzburg City Council appeared outside the Traube Inn in formal morning dress with top-hats clasped in their hands; led by the Mayor, they had come to escort Signor Mozart in solemn procession to the Cathedral. The huge Cathedral Square was packed tight with hundreds of people, who, when they saw Carlo, began a terrific clapping and shouting of '*Vivat!*', which caused him no little embarrassment. ('What has all this to do with me?' he wondered. 'Though I am the son of a great father, I have no importance whatever in my own right.') From a small group standing in front of the Cathedral's main door, a representative of His Majesty the Emperor stepped out to greet Carlo, followed by the Archbishop of Salzburg; King Maximilian of Bavaria; the head of the government and leading personages in Austrian music. Carlo's head began to hum; he was much relieved when the greetings were at last over and they all entered the Cathedral for the service to begin.

The old gentleman listened reverently to the sounds of Mozart's Mass in C major, and at first his eyes were fixed on the beautiful baroque altar and the priests' holy ritual. But after a while he had a strange feeling that someone behind him was staring at him. He turned his head slightly to the left, and then right round. At the end of a pew three rows back he saw Court Councillor Schachtner and his wife, apparently surrounded by a large family of sons and daughters, daughters-in-law and sons-in-law, and a variety of grandchildren of all ages. Carlo returned a polite bow from Schachtner, who had certainly been looking in his direction, and he observed that Frau Schachtner was also greeting him with a friendly nod.

'Barbara!' thought Carlo, as the sound of the lovely *Agnus Dei*

came to him from a long way away. 'Little Barbara, is it really you! Thirty-five years ago I met you for a few weeks only, yet love for you filled my whole being and I hoped you would be mine. Then one day my brother Wolfgang came between us like a storm-wind and uprooted all our dreams, his own as well as mine and yours.'

An image of his brother came into his mind. 'Poor Wolfgang! It must be twelve years now since the storm-wind ceased, and his long wanderings found their last rest. I only saw him once again—about twenty-one years ago, I suppose—when our father's statue was unveiled out there on Michaelsplatz, and Wolfgang played the B minor concerto at the festival concert. He was already a very sick man by then, and we did not speak much to one another. Perhaps Mama might have brought us closer together, but she had died only a few weeks before.'

Carlo's thoughts returned to the old woman sitting behind him in the Cathedral: 'Barbara! She never requited my love in those far-off days, yet I cherished her in my heart, and because of that I have never married.' He glanced shyly round. 'Was it really this stout, amiable, dignified-looking matron who caused all those tumultuous hopes and dreams and renunciations?' In his long years as a bachelor, Signor Mozart was used to being alone and had thus developed a mild penchant for philosophy. He recalled now a phrase from Aunt Nannerl's diary, the phrase Father Dominicus had quoted from Giordano Bruno when baptising little Jeanette Berchtold in St Gilgen village church: '*In tria hilaris, in hilaritate tristis*'. 'Yes', mused Carlo, 'it is a true tragi-comedy—old Barbara over there, and I here . . . or should one not rather call it a comic tragedy?'

After the service, wreaths were placed at the foot of the Mozart statue: first, one from the Emperor (great-grandnephew of that Joseph for whose taste *Il Seraglio* had too many notes); then one from the Bavarian King (late successor of the Elector who had crowed: 'No vacancy!'); and one from the Archbishop of Salzburg (fifth or sixth successor to the arrogant prelate who had had Mozart thrown out of his ante-room). The statue seemed oblivious of all these little people down there. It gazed upwards to the radiant blue sky, and saw, on through all eternity: '*Tuba mirum* . .

During the banquet Carlo listened to the various encomia pronounced. Somebody praised the consistent generosity with which

the great Mozart had been treated by the House of Habsburg, another dwelt on the interest and patronage which had always been forthcoming from the Church, and a third spoke of Mozart's unqualified love for Salzburg and its inhabitants. Suddenly the thought occurred to Carlo: might it not be better in the end if the world should continue to see Mozart in the image which time and sentiment had formed of him, as the statue with gaze turned heavenwards, rather than as the human being Carlo had discovered last night in Aunt Nannerl's diary?

Signor Mozart was interrupted in his reverie by a polite sign from his neighbour, the Mayor of Salzburg, indicating that a few words of thanks were expected from him. Carlo had rehearsed a short speech, but he was now too agitated and also was no longer used to the German language. He only managed to stammer out a few disjointed sentences, and heard his own voice as if from a great distance: 'Deeply touched . . . my late father . . . unusual honour . . . my sincerest thanks. . . .' When he sat down again, he felt his pores exuding a cold perspiration, and his heart seemed to be hammering right up to his neck. He wished heartily that the whole function would soon be over, so that he might return to his hotel and lie down.

Within an hour or so he was in bed, heart and nerves had quietened down, and he began to think clearly. The long journey to Salzburg, all he had read in the diary, the excitements of today, everything had conspired to throw him out of his usual equanimity. His only wish now was to return as quickly as possible to Caversaccio, where he would busy himself all day in his little garden on the banks of Lake Como, and in the evenings sit in his library with the parish priest and the village doctor, chatting with them over a glass or two of wine.

No, it would be senseless to go to Schachtner's house tomorrow; to try to evade the Court Councillor's discreetly curious enquiries concerning the parcel, to exchange civilities with Barbara, and be reminded of long-past heart-aches, which could in the present seem only ridiculous. Carlo got out of bed, went over to a desk by the window and, taking a sheet of paper, wrote the letter which courtesy required:

My dear Court Councillor,

Yesterday, when you kindly invited me to dinner, I am afraid I grievously over-estimated my physical powers. I find that the strenuous activity of the last days has been rather too much for

me, and I am sure you will understand an old man's desire to get back as quickly as possible into the tranquil humdrum routine of his normal life. With profuse apologies, therefore, may I decline after all your most amiable invitation?

It remains for me to express my heartiest thanks to the keepers of the Salzburg Archives for having held my aunt's parcel so long in store, and to yourself for having duly handed it to me in accordance with the instructions in the Baroness' will. As you may have expected, the parcel contains documents and articles of purely private interest, nor is there anything which it would seem opportune at present for the last bearer of the name of Mozart to make public.

I should be glad if you would convey my apologies to your wife and my regrets that I shall not be able to meet her again. With my best wishes for your health and fortune, as also for that of your family,

I remain,

Yours very sincerely,

CARLO MOZART

He closed and sealed the letter, and handed it to one of the servants at the Traube, requiring him to deliver it to its destination with all dispatch. Then he asked the landlord to provide two seats for him in the post-chaise which would be setting off towards Italy by way of Innsbruck on the following morning.

It was only during the festival concert which took place that evening in the University Hall, and while the orchestra was playing Mozart's G minor Symphony, that Carlo once more found himself thinking about his father, the diary and its contents. Then, to the accompaniment of the noble music, the characters appeared before his eyes as on the stage of a puppet theatre: little Wolfert sitting under an oak-tree in Chelsea with Christian Bach, and the dying Mozart singing the *Lacrimosa* from the Requiem; Nannerl on the snow-covered road leading out of St Gilgen, and Nannerl in d'Yppold's arms; young Constanze copying music in the ugly malodorous apartment in Mannheim, and the wealthy Baroness Nissen accepting the world's homage; Leopold Mozart in Hannibal Square on his daily walk with Bimpy, and Mama Mozart in the small Paris attic, patiently awaiting Wolfgang's return for his evening

meal; Michael Haydn throwing the manuscript of his violin duets into the river, and Joseph Haydn standing before Prince Esterhazy in the livery of a servant; the mad Hofdemel with a razor in his hand; Leutgeb, the Grey Messenger, counting out fifty ducats on the table; Puchberg and Deiner with Nannerl at the pauper's grave; DaPonte and Casanova, Nancy, Basle, Bullinger, Stadler, Madame d'Épinay. . . .

And finally Carlo saw himself, the little Karl, with cheeks flushed by excitement, sitting in the box of the Theater an der Wien, and listening to the Fowler's Song in awed delight.

The old man felt overcome by an immense, constricting shyness, similar to that which he had experienced the previous night in the moment before opening the sealed parcel. Aunt Nannerl had left it to him to decide what should happen to the quill and the diary, and he knew that he could not bring himself to make this decision—at least not today or tomorrow, not yet. One day he might find it right to destroy both, or else let them rest among archives for another hundred years, or perhaps—a sudden thought—to send them back to the place whence they had first come: to London, to St James' Palace . . .

The symphony had ended. Carlo went out into the street, mingling with the hundreds who had been in the audience. For a few minutes he wandered round amidst the festive throng without being recognised by anybody. He saw the flags and lanterns and garlands, the flares on the mountains, the gaily-illuminated little ships on the Salzach, the laughing boys and girls. His old placid contentment returned, and that night he slept better than he had done for many days. When he awoke next morning, Giuseppe had already packed the trunks and made everything ready for their departure. Carlo opened the locked drawer of the bureau and transferred the parcel to a small hand-case he was carrying; then he left the room.

In the small entrance-hall of the inn he found waiting for him the three representatives of the festival committee who had welcomed him so kindly the day before yesterday. They expressed the hope that Signor Mozart had slept well, and that his stay in Salzburg had been a pleasurable one. Carlo thanked them and shook hands, then walked out into the small square in front of the Traube, and let Giuseppe help him into the post-chaise. The old servant placed the tartan

travelling rug carefully round his master's knees, Carlo waved a friendly farewell to the three delegates, and the coach began to move.

Now it passed the bridge over the Salzach, and he was able to throw a quick look at the old Hagenauer house. Then the post-chaise continued on its way, by Michaelsplatz and the Residence, past the Cathedral and St Peter's, out towards the Innsbruck road. He sank back into the comfortable corner seat, stretched out his legs, and enjoyed a few minutes of peaceful relaxation.

When Carlo next looked out of the coach window, it was to watch the silhouette of the city fading slowly away on the horizon.

